MAGIC AND RITUAL IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

PAUL MIRECKI
MARVIN MEYER,
Editors

BRILL

MAGIC AND RITUAL IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

RELIGIONS IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

EDITORS

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VOLUME 141

MAGIC AND RITUAL IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

EDITED BY

PAUL MIRECKI

AND

MARVIN MEYER

BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON · KÖLN
2002

This series Religions in the Graeco-Roman World presents a forum for studies in the social and cultural function of religions in the Greek and the Roman world, dealing with pagan religions both in their own right and in their interaction with and influence on Christianity and Judaism during a lengthy period of fundamental change. Special attention will be given to the religious history of regions and cities which illustrate the practical workings of these processes.
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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Die Deutsche Bibliothek – CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

Magic and ritual in the ancient world / ed. by Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer. – Leiden ; Boston ; Köln : Brill, 2001
(Religions in the Graeco-Roman world ; Vol. 141)
ISBN 90–04–10406–2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Cataloging-in Publication Data is also available

ISSN 0927-7633
ISBN 90 04 11676 1

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

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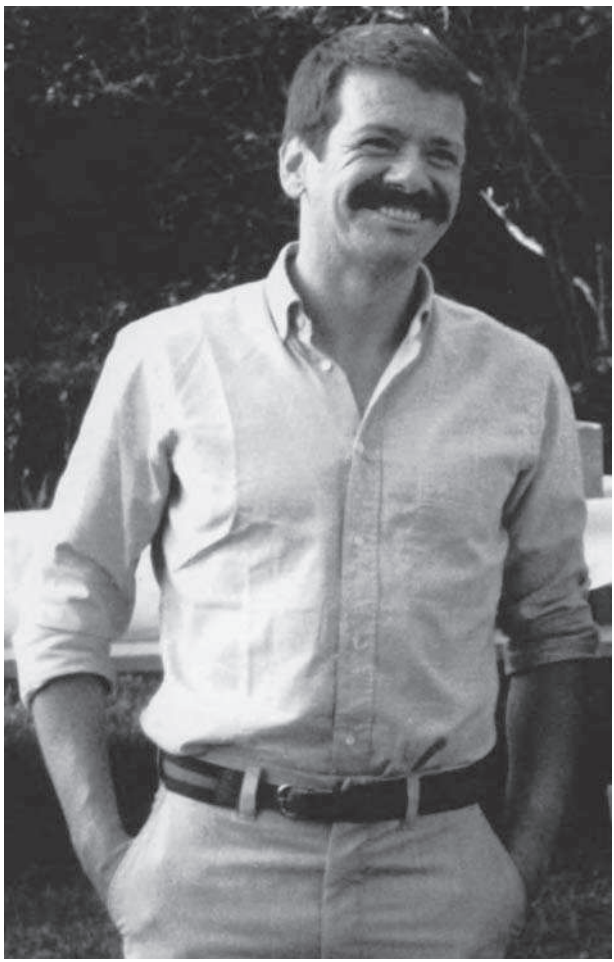

In memory of
William M. Brashear
1946 – 2000

INTRODUCTION

Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer

If the title of the present volume, *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, is reminiscent of an earlier volume in the Brill series Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, it should come as no surprise. In August 1992 Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer invited a series of colleagues from a variety of disciplines to an international conference, held at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, on "Magic in the Ancient World." The scholars in attendance all addressed the phenomena of ancient magic and ritual power from the perspectives of their own disciplines, but they did so with a particular concern for the general issues of definition and taxonomy. From that conference there emerged a volume, edited by Meyer and Mirecki and published in 1995 by Brill, entitled *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*. As noted in the introduction to the volume, "An understanding of 'magic' as 'ritual power' … permeates many of the essays in this volume" (4).

The present volume comes from a similar scholarly conference. In August 1998 Meyer and Mirecki assembled the *magoi* once again—many of them the usual suspects—at a second international conference, held at Chapman University in Orange, California, and the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity of Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California, on "Magic in the Ancient World." (This conference was made possible through the generous support of the Griset Lectureship Fund and the Wang-Fradkin Professorship of Chapman University and the Coptic Magical Texts Project of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity.) As at the Kansas conference, Jonathan Z. Smith delivered a plenary lecture, and the scholars at the California conference similarly employed the methods and perspectives of their disciplines to discuss ancient magic and ritual power. And as at the Kansas conference, the volume emerging from the conference, *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World*, seeks to contribute to the continuing discussion of magic and ritual power in the ancient Near East, Judaism, Greco-Roman antiquity, and early Christianity, with an additional contribution on the world of Coptic and Islamic Egypt.

The strength of the present volume, we suggest, lies in the breadth of scholarship represented. While, as in the previous volume, issues of description and classification are everywhere apparent or assumed in these essays (and especially in Part 2), and the understanding of magic

as ritual power runs as a scholarly thread through the book, the essays themselves are remarkably wide-ranging in their approaches and concerns. Taken together, the essays thus provide an excellent glimpse of the *status quaestionis* of the study of magic and ritual power in Mediterranean and Near Eastern antiquity and late antiquity.

* * *

The essays in this volume are organized into six sections: 1) "New Texts of Magic and Ritual Power," 2) "Definitions and Theory," 3) "The Ancient Near East," 4) "Judaism," 5) "Greek and Roman Antiquity," and 6) "Early Christianity and Islam."

Part 1 presents four essays in which new magical texts and new interpretations are made available. In an essay entitled "A New Magical Formulary," William Brashear and Roy Kotansky present the *editio princeps* of P. Berol. 17202. This fourth-century papyrus sheet from a magical handbook preserves six recipes in Greek: a Christian liturgical exorcism with *historiolae* focusing on Jesus' miracles, a pagan invocation to silence opponents, a hymnic invocation, an adjuration with ritual procedures, a spell to achieve an erection, and a sacred stele termed the "second." In "Two Papyri with Formulae for Divination," David Jordan improves upon two previously published papyri with formulae for divination (*PGM* XXIVa and LXXVII). The first involves a ritual with 29 palm leaves, each with the name of a god written upon it, and the other involves instructions for receiving an oracle through an invocation. In "An Early Christian Gold *Lamella* for Headache," Roy Kotansky presents the *editio princeps* of a Greek text from a private collection in London. This second-century *lamella* may derive from a Hellenistic Jewish milieu that appropriated Jesus' name for its magical purposes, or from an early type of Jewish-Christianity. The text apparently dates from a time when magical texts had not yet been "commercialized" to the extent that can be observed when later formulaic language replaced the more independent style of amulet composition. In "A Seventh-Century Coptic Limestone in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Bodl. Coptic inscr. 426)," Paul Mirecki presents the *editio princeps* of a series of short texts written on a large Coptic limestone. The titles and incipits of the four gospels and a list of the apostles' names often occur together in Christian magical texts, suggesting a context of ritual power for these texts and even for the limestone itself. The wide-ranging possibilities for the stone's function suggest either that it was a scribe's display copy for school texts or for the writing of amulets, or else that it was a monastic boundary stone with inspirational or apotropaic words of power.

Part 2 presents five essays that address explicitly theoretical matters of definition and description. In "Great Scott! Thought and Action One More Time," Jonathan Z. Smith opens his essay with a discussion of the origin and meaning of the popular thaumatic ejaculation "Great Scott!," which serves as an entree into the scholarly debate on the definition of magic as a phenomenon that is either primarily "thought (belief)" or "action (ritual)." Smith concludes with a plea for a theoretical resolution to this question of duality. In "Theories of Magic in Antiquity," Fritz Graf responds to R. A. Markus' study on pre-Augustinian theories about magic and Augustine's own neglected semiotic theory. Graf demonstrates that there were several different pre-Augustinian theories of magic in both Greek and Roman thinking, and that Augustine's theory was not as neglected as Markus supposes. Graf offers suggestions on how the results of his study are useful for the further history of theoretical reflections on magic. In "The Poetics of the Magical Charm: An Essay on the Power of Words," Henk Versnel addresses poetics in the double sense of "the art of making poetry and the art of creation." Through a careful exegesis of several texts, Versnel demonstrates that the magical charm is the product of a happy alliance between the expectancy of a marvelous potential in an "other world," beyond the boundaries of space and time, and oral utterance, which can belong to common communication or can even transcend speech and help create the "other world." In "Dynamics of Ritual Expertise in Antiquity and Beyond: Towards a New Taxonomy of 'Magicians,'" David Frankfurter offers a cross-cultural analysis of what he calls "the dynamics of ritual expertise," in the service of constructing a spatial (center/periphery) model for understanding indigenous conceptions of ritual expertise. This model, which allows for a certain fluidity among types, engages current discussions of taxonomy in the history of religions (definitions of "magic" and "magicians") beyond the static classifications of M. Weber and G. Van der Leeuw. In "Fiat Magia," Christopher A. Hoffman begins with E. E. Evans-Pritchard's observation that all labels (such as the term "magic") are essentially arbitrary, and proceeds to survey some of the major approaches and taxonomies in the modern history of the study of magic. Hoffman ends by noting that the approaches he surveys have been valuable in helping scholars move away from the essentially negative evaluation of magic that once dominated the field.

Part 3 presents four essays on magic and ritual among ancient Mesopotamians, Hittites, Canaanites, and Israelites. In "Dividing a God," Richard H. Beal examines Hittite terms and rituals used in priestly instructions for "dividing a deity." Hittite ritual specialists

were able to create two separate cult centers for the same deity by performing specific rituals that caused the deity to divide itself. Then, through a pattern of rituals of considerable interest to scholars of magic and ritual power, the *allomorph* was coaxed into moving to the new cult center. In "Translating Transfers in Ancient Mesopotamia," JoAnn Scurlock applies to ancient Mesopotamian studies the classic analysis of modern Moroccan ritual and belief by E. Westermarck. Scurlock identifies and analyzes Mesopotamian rituals and beliefs concerning "transferal," in which a concrete or abstract quality, such as a disease, is transferred out of an afflicted person, animal, or object into another person, animal, or object. She identifies a striking congruence between ritual and belief in ancient and modern religions. In "Necromancy, Fertility and the Dark Earth: The Use of Ritual Pits in Hittite Cult," Billie Jean Collins analyzes Hittite texts concerning ritual pits and the sacrifice of pigs to the supreme underworld deity. Collins shows that previously separate porcine associations of fertility and purification/offering were combined to generate a ritual *koine* in which fertility became chthonian by virtue of its symbolic association with the pig and the ambiguity inherent in the term "earth" (fertile soil and underworld). In "Canaanite Magic Versus Israelite Religion: Deuteronomy 18 and the Taxonomy of Taboo," Brian B. Schmidt proposes that the prevailing interpretive mode, which avers that ancient Israel syncretistically adopted Canaanite magic, finds only partial justification in isolated biblical traditions. Schmidt argues that the Hebrew Bible, taken as a whole, hardly yields a unified portrayal of what constitutes magic over against religion, let alone how one is to distinguish ancient Canaanites from ancient Israelites.

Part 4 presents three essays on aspects of magic within Judaism. In "Secrecy and Magic, Publicity and Torah: Unpacking a Talmudic Tale," S. Daniel Breslauer investigates the rejection of magic in the Talmudic tractate Sanhedrin and seeks to understand the type of Judaism contrasted with magic. Breslauer focuses on the ideas of Rabbi Aqiva and the story of his martyrdom, and the approach to magic by Aqiva that later dominates the Talmudic approach. Breslauer suggests that the Talmud, through its narrative of Aqiva's death, teaches that magic is a process and an attitude, not a particular action, that the difference between magic and liturgy lies not in what it accomplishes but in its public display, and that magic is antithetical to Judaism because the Jewish mission is one of public proclamation rather than secretive ritual. In "Shamanic Initiatory Death and Resurrection in the *Hekhalot* Literature," James R. Davila explores an aspect of the Hekhalot tradition of the shamanic vocation of the "descenders to the chariot": an experience of initiatory disintegration

and reintegration that establishes the shaman's supernatural power. Those who "descend to the chariot" in their quest to gaze directly at God face great dangers, specifically personal disintegration that burns and rends its victims; but worthy mortals like Enoch and Rabbi Aqiva (Akiva) are transformed rather than destroyed. This is an experience strikingly similar to that of shamans who undergo a personal destruction and resurrection in order to function in the supernatural world. In "Sacrificial Themes in Jewish Magic," Michael D. Swartz discusses how the image of the ancient sacrificial cult influenced the literature of Jewish magic. Both magic and sacrifice deal with physical aspects of religion, and each is concerned with dispelling the demonic and attracting the divine. The two elements that make a ritual specifically magical in its appropriation of the Temple ritual are the power of the divine name and the means by which the ritual makes an exclusive cult available to all who possess its secrets. Both elements entail a shift in focus from the collective concerns of the Temple cult to the concerns of the individual.

Part 5 presents five essays on magical texts and practices in Greco-Roman antiquity. In "The Ethnic Origins of a Roman-Era *Philtrokatadesmos* (*PGM* IV 296-434)," Christopher A. Faraone reconsiders arguments for the Egyptian origin of a Roman-era *philtrokatadesmos* found in a *PGM* text (with five other attestations). Faraone argues, primarily against Robert Ritner's analysis, that this *philtrokatadesmos* in fact derived not from Egyptian models and traditions, but rather is an amalgam of two originally separate Greek and Semitic practices that entered Roman Egypt, when it accommodated local practices by acquiring Egyptian features. In "Sacrifice in the Greek Magical Papyri," Sarah Iles Johnston examines a neglected area of research, the roles that sacrifice played in magical rituals. Focusing on three spells found in *PGM* IV, Johnston argues that the practitioner of sacrifice innovated within standard patterns, neither ignoring traditional rituals nor reversing or corrupting them. Such a practitioner was a "creative conservator" of traditional rituals, who used expert knowledge to extend sacrificial rituals while preserving their underlying ideologies. In "Beans, Fleawort, and the Blood of a Hamadryas Baboon: Recipe Ingredients in Greco-Roman Magical Materials," Lynn R. LiDonnici examines the four types of substances used in recipes within the *PGM* and focuses on the fourth type, which consists of exotic substances with no ordinary roles in temple life or domestic shrines, and which may or may not have any actual pharmacological effects. A primary concern of scholars has been the identification of these substances. LiDonnici suggests that synonyms and descriptions of these substances in the *PGM* are not a license for

substitution with other more normal materials, and that common plants cannot be assumed to lie behind rare and unusual substances required in the *PGM* handbooks. In "The Witches' Thessaly," Oliver Phillips focuses on the ancient Greek reputation for sorcery in the geographical region of Thessaly. Phillips investigates primary texts indicating this reputation for sorcery and, at the end of his analysis, suggests that the popular legend of Medea is the primary source, associating her with the Thessalian port of Iolcus. In "Speech Acts and the Stakes of Hellenism in Late Antiquity," Peter T. Struck argues that in order to understand Iamblichus' work *de Mysteriis*, which advocates the practice of mysterious sacred rites to achieve spiritual ascent in contrast to the strategies of pure contemplation extending from Plato to Plotinus, scholars must be attentive to two entangled visions: magic and Eastern foreigners. Struck analyzes the debate between Iamblichus (irrational, magic, foreign languages) and Porphyry (rational, contemplation, Greek language), and demonstrates that both thinkers agreed on the terms of the dichotomy, though they valued them in different ways.

Part 6 presents three essays on magic and ritual power in early Christianity and Islam. In "The Prayer of Mary Who Dissolves Chains in Coptic Magic and Religion," Marvin Meyer discusses several texts, especially P. Heid. Inv. Kopt. 685, featuring the Virgin Mary offering a prayer of power in order to provide release from bondage. Meyer provides an overview of the larger setting of the prayer of Mary, and illustrates how the prayer of Mary and rituals of liberation from bondage also function within the context of the Coptic church. This raises the question of whether the magical Mary of texts of ritual power may be distinguished from the miraculous Mary of the Coptic church. Or, as Meyer puts it, "Mary still is in control of the chains, but the question remains, who is in control of Mary?" In "The Magician and the Heretic: The Case of Simon Magus," Ayse Tuzlak studies the figure of Simon Magus in the light of differing early Christian portrayals of him as a heretic and as a magician, with a view to understanding the way some early Christians understood the terms "magic" and "magician." In "Ancient Execration Magic in Coptic and Islamic Egypt," Nicole B. Hansen investigates the extent to which the folklore of modern Egypt can be traced back to pharaonic times. Taking as a point of departure Ritner's observation that ancient Egyptian execration praxis remained virtually unchanged for 4000 years, Hansen demonstrates the continuity of the mechanics of execration practice in Egypt in later times. In this way she shows that the ancient religious beliefs and practices have been recast by practitioners of magic in terms of the

two religions dominant in Egypt in later times: Coptic Christianity and Islam.

The Index of Primary Sources at the conclusion of the volume has been prepared by Linden Youngquist.

* * *

Among the essays in *Magic and Ritual in the Ancient World* is the papyrological presentation of the Greek text from Berlin, P. Berol. 17202. Our late colleague William M. Brashear presented the text at the California magic conference, and Roy Kotansky completed the work on the essay after Bill's untimely death. This essay is placed at the beginning of the volume in order to give prominence to this study in particular and to Bill's papyrological work in general. Bill Brashear was educated at Oberlin College, the Freie Universität in Berlin, and the University of Michigan, from which institution he received his Ph.D. in Classics. Bill was a long-term staff member of the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin where he was keeper of Greek Papyri from 1979 until his untimely death, and he lectured throughout Europe, North America, and the People's Republic of China. His brilliant papyrological contributions are well known. We need only recall his bibliographical essay, "The Greek Magical Papyri: an Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928-1994) [Indices in vol. II 18.6]," his edition of *A Mithraic Catechism from Egypt*, and his most recent book, *Wednesday's Child is Full of Woe*, in order to appreciate his knowledge, his control of scholarly information, and his papyrological exactness and creativity. In February 2000 Bill died, after battling illness for a period of time. We miss him very much, both personally and professionally. With sadness at his passing and appreciation for his life and thought, we dedicate this volume to Bill.

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PART ONE

NEW TEXTS OF MAGIC AND RITUAL POWER

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A NEW MAGICAL FORMULARY

William Brashear†
Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin

and

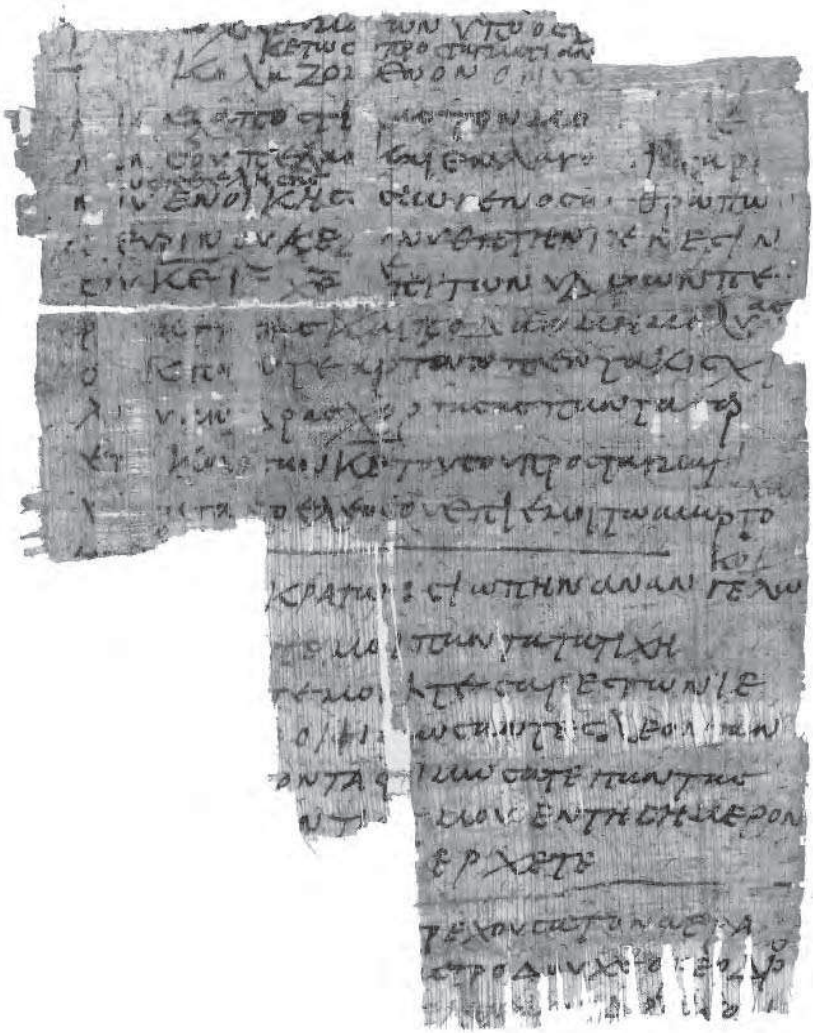
Roy Kotansky
Santa Monica, CA

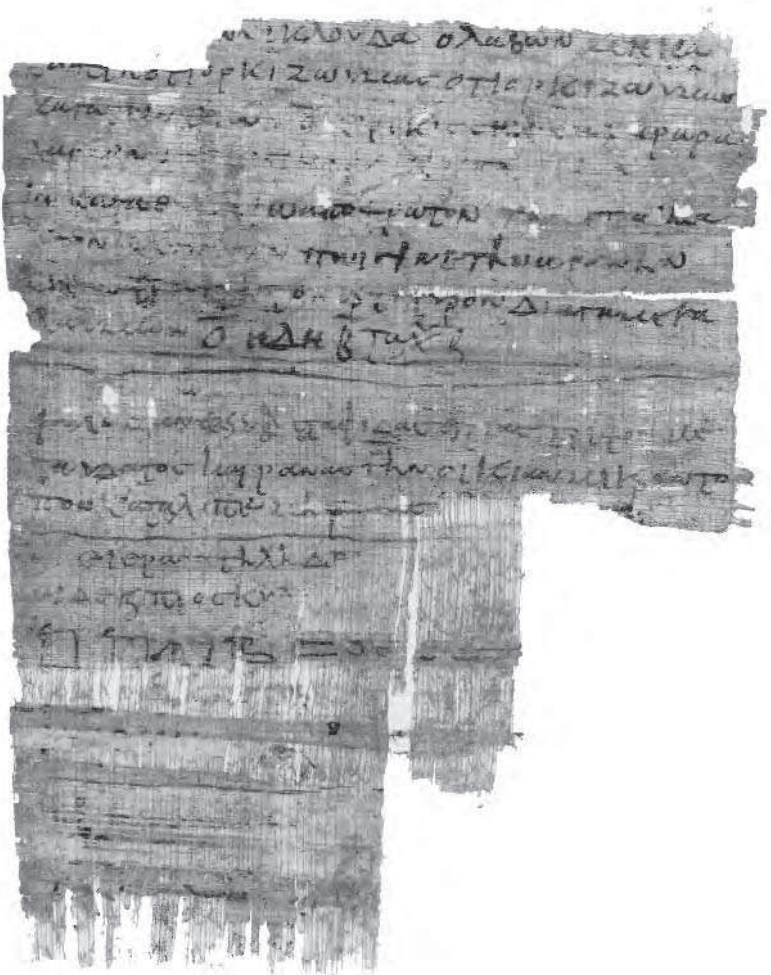
P. Berol. 17202	IVP
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin	19.0 cm. x 24.1 cm.
Preußischer Kulturbesitz	Papyrus codex sheet
Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung[1]	Provenance unknown (?)

This fragmentary leaf from a papyrus codex preserves, in part or in full, six separate recipes for magical spells, separated from one another with horizontal lines that run the full width of the column: **I.** an exorcism with allusions to the birth and miracles of Jesus (1-12); **II.** a pagan φιμωτικόν to silence opponents (13-19); **III.** a prose, hymnic invocation (20-22); **IV.** an adjuration with ritual procedures against a thief (ὁ κλέπτων, 23-30); **V.** a spell to achieve an erection (31-33); and **VI.** a "Sacred Stele" (ἱερὰ στηλή), called the "second" (34-36).

The papyrus sheet measures 19.0 cm. across and 24.1 cm. high. Whether the sheet was originally a single looseleaf, one of several, or part of a complete codex, cannot be determined. It is also impossible to establish with certainty whether one side, in fact, preceded the other; however, we have designated one as side A (vertical fibers) and the other as side B (horizontal fibers) to facilitate discussion. We have

[1] We would like to thank the able staff of the *Papyrussammlung* in Berlin for their permission to present this important papyrus text, and Margarette Büsing for the excellent photograph. The initial reading and decipherment of this difficult text is due to the tireless and indefatigable efforts of the late William M. Brashear, without whom this edition would not have been possible. Dr. R. Kotansky is responsible for the editing and the commentary on the text. Any outstanding problems of interpretation remain his. Professor Paul Mirecki has provided the introductory description of the papyrus sheet. Additional improvements in the reading of the text come through the keen insights of David Jordan, Paul Mirecki, Marv Meyer, and the rest of the team of the Kansas Papyrology Conference, whose fruitful discussions and interpretations on this unusual text have contributed greatly to its overall interpretation. Although it is hoped that the spirit of the commentary and analysis of the text reflect the sort of scholarship Bill would have enjoyed, we can only regret that we have been unable to benefit from the full range of analysis that his exacting brand of research would have doubtless brought to its explication.





also numbered the lines seriatim from side A across to side B. Side A may indeed precede side B, as B appears to end in line 36 in a list of magical letters (χαρακτῆρες). Although such characters often conclude magical texts, barring any further evidence this alone cannot serve to establish the priority of one side over the other. The loss of text at both the top and bottom margins (see below) further confounds the issue.

The papyrus leaflet is constructed of two smaller sheets which had been glued together and presummably formed part of a blank scroll, or an uninscribed portion of a used scroll. The kollesis, or glueing between the sheets, is clearly visible and measures ca. 2.3 cm. wide. The overlapping edges of the two sheets are visible on side A between lines 7 and 8, and on side B between lines 27 and 28. The upper sheet measures ca. 19.0 x 7.0 cm., and the lower sheet, ca. 19.0 x 19.4 cm. The kollesis, a naturally stronger portion of the sheet, has caused enough stress on the weaker portions outside of the kollesis to result in some damage at the bottom edge of the kollesis: there one finds a long horizontal lacuna between lines 7 and 8 of side A (= lines 28 and 29 of side B).

Where the papyrus is intact, strips of fiber once inscribed have loosened and fallen away from the sheet. This type of damage is clearly evident on side A, where vertical strips have fallen away resulting in a loss of letters from the same sections of lines 1 through 12, and on side B, where horizontal strips have fallen away resulting in the loss of text below line 36. Other inscribed portions have lost ink through abrasion (side B, lines 25-29).

The scribe has drawn several horizontal lines across both sides of the sheet as text separators (following the lines 12, 19, 30 [two parallel lines], 33, and 38). There appears to be only one scribal hand which varies greatly in both style and size. This variation suggests that the recipes were occasionally copied by a single individual over an indeterminable period from either another sourcebook (or sourcebooks), or from amulets randomly acquired. The scribe might also have used more than one pen and certainly more than one solution of ink. He (or she) writes large square letters with a slant to the upper right in the first four recipes but in recipes five and six changes style. There the writing becomes more hurried and cursive, and the ink lighter through dilution. Overall, the scribe writes in a practiced but hurried style typical of documentary hands of the fourth century CE.

The text shows typical late features in spelling, including the intrusive final -ν in 3rd declension accusatives (μονογενήν for μονογενῆ in lines 3f.; πῆδαν [viz. παῖδαν] for παῖδα in line 4; λέονταν for λέοντα in line 16). A number of minor corrections are supplied above the line

(7, 8, 12, 21, 30, 31); the first recipe shows phrases added, in somewhat smaller letters, interlinearly.

The text itself also presents a number of morphological and syntactical anomalies. In line 1 there may be an apparent use of the active voice for the passive, although the reading is questionable. Several of these difficulties in the text can only be explained from the thesis that the scribe was working with from a cursive model that had, at some time, been formerly misunderstood in transcription. Thus ὠχλευκότων, if correct, would presuppose an original ὀχλουμένων (1); ο̲εμ[όνων an original δ̲εμ[όνων (leg. δαι[μόνων [1]); ὁ νύσ[ας an original ὁ λύσ[ας (2); ποδῶν an original πόδας; κλού̲δα (sic) an original κλάσμα (23); and ἀναλλαβά (sic) an original ἀναλαβών (31). In any event, the text in these places is unusually corrupt. Elsewhere, the syntax and sense has gone awry, especially with spell **IV** (lines 23-30), where little more than disjointed, meaningless phrases seem to be preserved. Two of the extant titles (rubrics) use the genitive (of advantage?) without any preposition to introduce the spell: τ̣[ῶ]ν ὠχλ̣ευκ̣ό̣τ̣ων (1) and ψ̣ω̣λῆς (31); another is a simple title in the nominative, εἰερὰ σ̣τηλὴ δε̣υ̣[τέρα] (34), indented in the text (34). An earlier phrase, τὸν κλέπτοντ̣α̣ πνιγῖν {ε} (28), also seems to be *in eisthesi*, and thus begins a rubric, as well.

P. Berol. 17202

τ̣[ῶ]ν ω̣χλ̣ε̣υ̣κ̣ο̣[.]ων ὑπὸ ΟΕ̣Μ[ca. 9]
1a κ̄(ύρι)ε̄ τῷ σῷ προστάγματι ἀγ̣[θρώποις vac.
τ̣[ὸν] κολαζόμενον ὁ γ̣ύσ[ας .].[..]
καὶ ὁ̣ ἐξαποστίλας τὸν μονογε-
νῆν σου πε̂δαν καὶ ἐν λαγόσι παρθ̣[έ]-
4a ὡς ἠθέλησας
5 νο̣υ ἐνοικήσας· τ̣ὰ̣ γένος ἀνθρώπω̣ν
ἐ̣ξ̣ευρῖν οὐκ ἐδυνύθη τὴν γένεσίν
σου, κ̄(ύρι)ε̄ Ἰ̄(ησοῦ)ς̄ Χ(ρίστ)ε̄, [ὁ] `ἐ´πὶ τῶν ὑδάτων πε-
ρ[ι]πατήσας καὶ ποδῶν μὴ μολύ̣`ας´·
ὁ [ἐ]κ πέντε ἀρτῶν πεντακισχι-
10 λί[ο]υ<ς> ἄνδρας χορτάσας. πάντα γὰρ
ἐπ[ή]κουσαν̣, κ̄(ύρι)ε̄, τοῦ σοῦ προστάγματι·
ἐλ[θ]ὲ κ̣α̣τ̣ὰ τὸ ἔλεό<ς> σου ἐπὶ ἐμοῖ τῷ ἁμαρτο`λῷ´.
12a .μ.._____κοι(νά)
[e.g. μυστήριον] κρατῶ· σιωπὴν ἀνανγέλω·
[ca. 9]τε μοι πάντα τὰ τίχη· vacat
15 [ca. 9]τε μοι ἡ τέ<σ>σαρες γωνίε·

[ca. 9]ε, οἱ φιμώσαντες λέονταν
[καὶ δράκ]οντα· φιμώσατε πάντας
[τοὺς ἐνα]ντίο[υ]ς μου ἐν τῇ σήμερον
[ἡμέρᾳ, ἤδη β΄ ταχὺ β΄].ερχετε. vacat

[ca. 12] τρέχουσα τὸν ἀέρα
[ca. 12] ἀστροδοῦχε ὀρεοδρ`ό΄(με)
[ca. 12] ἐλθέ μοί δράκον

[ca. 10]νη · ΚΛΟΥΔΑ ὁ λαβὼν μὴ κα-
ταπῖν ὅτι ὀρκίζω ὑμᾶς {ὅτι ὀρκίζω ὑμᾶ[.]ς}
κατὰ τῶν θίων ὀ(νομάτων) ερικισση · αεα · αραρα-
χαραρα · τραψες (traces ?)
ιω παταθ̣ν̣ᾳ̣ξ ιω <απομψ> ἀποτρώγον τάδ᾽ ἔτ̣ο̣ιμα
τὸν κλέπτοντ̣ᾳ̣ πνιγῖν{ε} τὴν ὠράνην
μὴ κατα...γρη τὸν ἀρτάτυρον, διὰ τ̣ὰ μεγά-
λα ὑμῶν ὀ(νόματα) ἤδη β΄ ταχ`ὺ΄ β΄

ψ̣ω̣λῆς· ἀνελ{λ}ᾳ̣β`ᾳ΄ σταφίδας ἀγρίας τρίψον με-
τὰ ὕδατος καὶ ῥάγας τὴν οἰκίαν, μικρ̣ὸν τό-
πον κατάλιπε μὴ ῥάνας ..[..]ω̣[.].

εἱερὰ σ̣τηλὴ δευ̣[τέρα]
ἔρδε καὶ προσκύλ[ισον
magical characteres
(traces)
(traces)

(traces)
(traces)
(traces), etc.

---

1 τ̣[ῶ]ν ὠχλ̣ευκ̣ό̣τ̣ων: τ̣[ῶ]ν ὀχλουμέ̣νων act. pro pass. ? ᾳ̣εμ[όνων]: δαιμ[όνων] 2 ν̣ύσ[ας: λ̣ύσ[ας 3 ἐξαποστίλας: ἐξαποστείλας 3/4 μονογε/νῆν: μονογε/νῆ 4 πῆδαν: παῖδα 5 τ̣ὼ γένος: τ̣ὸ γένος 6 -ευρῖν: -ευρεῖν ἐδυνύθη: ἐδυνήθη 7 Ἰ(ησοῦ)ξ̣: Ἰ(ησο)ῦ nom. pro voc. 11 τοῦ σοῦ: τῷ σῷ 12 ἁμαρτολῷ: ἁμαρτωλῷ 13 ἀνανγέλω: ἀναγγέλω 14 τίχη: τείχη 15 ἡ / γωνίε: αἱ / γωνίαι 16 λέονταν: λέοντα 19 .ερχετε: .ερχεται? 23/24 καταπῖν: καταπεῖν 25 θίων: θείων 26 τραψες: τράψῃς? 27 ἀποτρώγον: ἀποτρώγων 28 in eisthesi τὸν κλέπτοντ̣ᾳ̣ πνιγῖν{ε}: πνιγεῖν τὴν ὠράνην: τὴν οὐράνην 29 ἀρτάτυρον: ἀρτότυρον 32 μικράν: μικρόν ? 34 in eisthesi εἱερὰ: ἱερά.

Translation

I

For those troubled by [evil] dem[ons]:
([...], *Lord, in your command to* [*all men* ...])
"The one having lo[osed] the one being punished [...],
And the one having sent forth his only begot/ten child,
and having indwelled the womb of the Vir[5]/gin"
(*As you have willed it*).
(*The race of mankind could not find out*
the manner of your birth, Lord Jesus Christ),
"The one having walked upon the waters,
having not even defiled his feet.
The one having from five loaves
fed five-thousand men."
(*For all have obeyed your command, Lord.*
[*Come*] *according to your mercy, upon me, the sinner!*)" (the usual)

II

I hold [a mystery ?]; I announce a silence!
["Open up ?] to me, all walls!
[Open up ?] to me, four corners!
[Come ?], O ones who have silenced lion
[and serp]ent! Silence all
[my oppo]nents this very [day],
[now, now; quickly, quickly] come (?).

III

"[ca. 12] who traverses the air
[ca. 12], star-holder, mountain-walker
[ca. 12], come to me, O serpent."

IV

[ca. 10]*nê*, he who takes the morsel (?); don't
devour it, because I adjure you (pl.) {because I adjure you (pl.)}
by the divine n(ames): *ERIKISSĒ AEA ARARA*
CHARARA TRAPSES
IŌ PATHNAX IŌ <APOMPS>, nibbling (?) these preparations (?).
To throttle the one who steals the chamber-pot (?);
do not (devour?) the bread-and-cheese, by your
great n(ames), now (2x), quickly (2x).

---

v

For an erection (?): Having gathered up wild stavesacre, crush it up with water. And having sprinkled your house leave a little (?) spot where you have not sprinkled ...

---

vi

A se[cond] Sacred Stele [...]:
Make an offering and roll up [...].

Magical Signs

Commentary

i

Christian Liturgical Exorcism. The text begins with an apparent exorcism (see Commentary below, *ad loc.*). A similar liturgical exorcism using Biblically based *historiolae* is preserved in P. Cairo 10263 (= *PGM* 13), a 4th or 5th cent. papyrus that had been buried with a mummy. Preisendanz-Henrichs II, p. 220 gives references to earlier literature that provides good parallels to the Christian elements in the text. One may also compare *Suppl. Mag.* I. 31 (= P. Turner 49) "with extracts from the Christian credo," and *PGM* 18 (5th / 6th cent.), a text that lists the account of the raising of Lazarus and the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, along with a kind of generic summary. *PGM* 23, as well, contains a free reading of Matt 14:18-31 (the Stilling of the Storm) for use as an amulet. For specific Greek parallels from liturgical exorcisms see, e.g. A. Strittmatter, "Ein griechisches Exorzismusbüchlein: Ms. Car. 143 b der Zentralbibliothek in Zürich," *Orientalia Christiana* (*De Oriente documenta, studia et libri*) XXVI-2 (1932), no. 78: 127-144 (Text), p. 131, 5-20, and the literature cited in the Commentary below. On "Greek Liturgical Exorcisms" see in general the literature in R. Kotansky, "Remnants of a Liturgical Exorcism on a Gem," *Le Muséon* 108 (1995), 143-156, esp. 147-149.

Our text also seems to include credal language along with an apparent liturgical response, sometimes interpolated as interlinear phrases set into the main body of the text (lines 1a, 5a). In lines 5-7 and 10-12, these "responses" must have been previously copied into the main body of the text, since they are not an interlinear addendum, per se, but read as a natural continuation of the previous credal material. They must have begun life as responsive verses some time before the present edition of our text. Further-

more, the first interlinear response (line 1a) is probably out of place. Accepting the alternating scheme presented below, this initial *kyrie*-type address is better suited if reconstructed to follow line 2 rather than to precede it. All this suggests that our text has enjoyed a number of prior generations, of which this, the latest, shows the most recent "responses" added in as our lines 1a and 5a (see reconstruction below).

All of the "responsory" lines, whether interlinear additions or contiguous text, display the same general character: the subjects of the verses invoke Jesus directly (in abbreviated form: κύριε, 1a, 11; κύριε Ἰησοῦς Χρίστε, 7); use the 2nd person pronoun "you(r)" in their invocation (τῷ σῷ , 1a; σου, 7; τοῦ σοῦ, 11; ἠθέλησας, 4a); and present themselves antithetically as a kind of group whose human condition (ἀν̣[θρώποις, 1a; τὸ γένος ἀνθώπων̣, 5; πάντα, 11) stands in obedience (ἐπ[ή]κουσαν, 11) to a divine command (προστάγματι, 1a, 11). These lines are characteristic of antiphonal replies by a liturgical group of some kind, perhaps a laity. For the featured use of "you" in similar contexts, one may compare A. D. Nock's remarks in "Liturgical Notes," *JTS* 30 (1929), 381-395, esp. p. 384 (on σοί γάρ as an "aside" in the Anaphora of Serapion). The contrasting "verse" material, on the other hand, uses only the 3rd person in its description of various divine acts (Christian *historiolae*) related to the kerygmatic life of Jesus (lines 2-5; 7-10). These are features that are not in themselves typical of personalized charms and amulets, even Christian ones, which routinely quote Biblical verses and Psalms verbatim and do not make reference to more theological allusions and responses of a liturgical sort. Only in line 12 does our text seem to revert back to a concept of an individual to be protected in its use of the singular ("me, the sinner"). This, too, however, probably has its origin in credal and liturgical material, not in magical and amuletic texts, even if exorcism seems to be in question. The exorcism here seems to be based on Christian liturgy and may indeed have been baptismal or eucharistic in function.

The use of similar liturgical "antiphonies" is echoed, albeit in an abbreviated form, in *P. Louvre E* 7332 *bis* (7th c.), ed. William M. Brashear, *Magica Varia* (Papyrologica Bruxellensia 25; Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1991), no. 2: A Christian Prayer Amulet. There the phrase, "For all are obedient to you with fear," in a manner similar to the apparent antiphonal reading of the Berlin papyrus here, occurs with but a single miracle-*historiola*. *PGM* 6d also preserves a fragment of a kindred text (cf. Brashear, *Magica Varia*, p. 66, for a corrected reading). The follow-

ing reconstruction illustrates how one might arrange such credal texts to highlight the antiphonal character of their purported liturgies. In the case of the Berlin papyrus, it is clear that some of the responses fall slightly out of sequence, for which see the Commentary below.

Liturgical Reconstructions

P. Berol. 17202:

Versicle: "The one having lo[osed] the one punished [...],

Responsory: *"Lord by your command to men ..."*

Versicle: "And the one having sent forth his onlybegot/ten child ..."

Responsory: *"As you have willed it ..."*

Versicle: "And having indwelled the womb of the Vir/gin ..."

Responsory: *"The race of humans has not been able to discover the nature of your birth, Lord Jesus Christ ..."*

Versicle: "The one having walked upon the waters, not having sullied his feet."

"The one having from five loaves filled five-thousand men ..."

Responsory: *"For all have obeyed your command, O Lord..."*
"Come, by your mercy, to me, a sinner ..."

P. Louvre E 7332 bis:

Responsory: *"O Lord Jesus Christ ..."*

Versicle: "The One who rebuked the winds and sea ..."

Responsory: *"For all obey you with fear."*

"Even now, O Lord, come in mercy and goodwill to your servant (so-and-so)", etc.

P. Graec. 19909, Natl. Bibl. Wien (= PGM 6d):

Versicle: [missing]

Responsory: *"For all obey you [with fear]."*

"Even now, O Lord, come in mercy and goodwill to your servant, Nonnus, and loose [her from all the pains] besetting her."

We mention too, that in P. Cairo 10263 (= *PGM* 13) the long list of kerygmatic items at the beginning of the prayer is capped by the formula, "Come, Mercy, the God of Eternity" in line 9 (for text, see Commentary below). This, in turn, is followed by the liturgical response, "Jesus, the voice that appeases sinners, as many as *we* who call upon Your Name" (line 14). This use of the communal "we" stands in contrast to the singular "I call upon you" that occurs at the beginning of that papyrus.

The original context of these liturgical texts with refrain seems to be eucharistic. Each ends with an appeal to the Lord to "come" (ἐλθέ), with mercy, to the sinner (or the sufferer). Although in each context both the recounting of miracles and the unison-like responses of the group, described collectively as "men" ("people") or "all", may be part of a pre-existent eucharistic text, they have been adapted for exorcistic and other kinds of healings. Even this therapeutic function, however, may have been original to the eucharistic setting itself. The ridding of demons and illness was a common prerequisite for both baptism and Eucharist in post-Apostolic Christianity; see R. Kotansky, "Excursus: Liturgical Exorcism, Solomon, and Magic *Lamellae*," in *Greek Magical Amulets* I (Opladen, 1994), pp. 174-180 (= *GMA*), and literature there cited. In instructions for the Mass given in Cyril of Jerusalem (see Alfred Adam, *Liturgische Texte* I. *Zur Geschichte der orientalischen Taufe und Messe im II. und IV. Jahrhundert* [3. Auflage. Kleine Texte 5; Berlin: deGruyter, 1960), Cyril von Jerusalem, Messe, V.2 (p. 15-17)], responses between priest and laity are given in the form of antiphonal readings.

1 ⳨[ῶ]ν ⲱχλ̣ⲉⲩ̣ⲕ̣ⲟ̣[.]ων: inevitably τῶν ὠχλευκότων (Brashear). But the presence of ὑπό ("by") and the general sense suggest the passive not active voice (ὠχλ̣ⲉⲩⲙ̣ⲉ̣́[ν]ων, for ὀχλουμένων). Although the reading ὠχλ̣ⲉⲩⲕ̣ό̣[τ]ων seems secure, it is possible that this represents the misidentification of certain cursive letters in a previous model that a scribe drew upon. Also, the cursive *kappa* here is wholly unlike those of the rest of the papyrus and looks almost identical, for example, to the mu of μονογε/νήν in 3f. Furthermore, although the -ⲟ⳨των in -ⲕ̣ⲟ⳨των is also the favored reading, this too may have derived from an originally cursive -ενων. See further the comments below, and those on line 23.

That ὠχλ̣ⲉⲩⲕ̣ό⳨των is perhaps an articial reading of sorts, is suggested at first blush by the unusual form of this verb. Ὀχλεύω is a rare variation of the common ὀχλέω, a variation preserved only in Homer, *Iliad* 21.260f., τοῦ μέν τε προρέοντος ὑπὸ ψηφῖδες ἅπασαι/ ὀλεῦνται (said of pebbles that are disturbed by the rush of flowing

water). Were it not for the presence of certain poetic forms elsewhere in the Berlin text (e.g., ἔρδω and προσκυλίω in 35; οὐράνη in 28), this form here would not otherwise be expected.

On ὀχλέω used in demonological contexts, cf. esp. Luke 6:18 (καὶ οἱ ἐνοχλούμενοι ἀπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων ἐθεραπεύοντο; cf. Acts 5:16); Tobit (LXX) 6:8B (ἐάν τινα ὀχλῇ δαιμόνιον ἢ πνεῦμα πονηρόν); *Act. Thom.* 12 (ὑπὸ δαιμόνων ὀχλούμενοι); Fritz Pradel, *Griechische und suditalienische Gebete, Beschwörungen und Rezepte des Mittelalters* (RGVV III.3; Giessen: Topelmann, 1907), p. 273, line 19f.: εἰς ὀχλούμενον ὑπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων, κτλ.; *Test. Sol.* (ed. McCown) L: I.2; II.5; IV.12; V.6,9,12; VII.8.

ΟΕΜ [ca. 9]: probably understand ΔΕΜ[όνων], viz. δαιμ[όνων] (e.g. δα μ[όνων κακῶν]), as suggested by the parallels, above (a reading of ὑπὸ ὀσμ[ῆς?, "by an odor", does not seem possible here—the *epsilon* is rather certain). The *omicron*, which is clearly written on the papyrus, is almost certainly an error for *delta*, albeit an error that originated in an earlier exemplar. Several readings in the text, as noted above, presuppose an earlier, corrupted model whose misspellings probably arose out of the misidentification of cursive writing.

On spells against demons, cf. the formulary in *Suppl. Mag.* II. 94 ii. 17: πρ(ὸς) δαιμονιαζομένου[ς, κτλ.; David R. Jordan & Roy D. Kotansky, "A Solomonic Exorcism," in *Kölner Papyri* (*P. Köln*), Band 8 (*Abhandlungen der Nordrhein-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Sonderreihe, Papyrologica Coloniensia*, Sonderreihe Vol. VII/8; Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1997), no. 338, pp. 53-69; *idem*, "Two phylacteries from Xanthos," *Revue Archéologique* 1996, 161-174, esp. 162-167.

κ̄(ύρι)ε̄ τῷ σῷ προστάγματι ἀγ[θρώποις: It does not appear that there are any traces preceding this line, although this cannot be ruled out entirely. This interlinear line reads like a collective response to the programmatic "liturgy" of the rest of the text, of which response there are several in our text. In this sense, what we have imbedded here is a liturgical reading (versicle) to which is added a congregational response (responsory), as noted above. Πρόσταγμα does not occur in the New Testament, per se, but is used by post-Apostolic writers, mostly in the plural: Diognetus 12:5 (sg.); 1 Clem. 2:8; 3:4; 20:5; 37:1; 40:5; 50:5; 58:2; 2 Clem. 19:3; cf. the verb προσέταξεν of the angel's command to Joseph in Matt. 1:24. For a similar use of τῷ προστάγματι in a liturgical exorcistic context, see André Jacob, "Un exorcisme inédit du Vat. gr. 1572," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 37 (1971), 244-249, p. 246 §4; F. C. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum. Being the Administration of the Sacraments*

and the Breviary Rites of the Armenian Church ... (Oxford: Clarendon, 1905), p. 394, 13.

2 *The Redemption of the Punished* (?). The order and reference of this introductory element in the kerygmatic catalogue, preserved as ṭ[òν] κολαζόμενον ὁ ν̣ύσ[ας ... (leg. λ̣ύσ[ας ...), is problematic (see below). The phrase probably refers to some initial redemptive act of God the Father in reference to the entire Christ-event that the exorcistic text is meant to catalogue, even though there is nothing from the New Testament narratives from which this might be derived (see § to follow). The subject of the main participial verb, ὁ λύσας, appears to be God, as is that of the two that follow, ἐξαποστ(ε)ίλας and ἐνοικήσας. With the liturgical vocative that comes next, "O Lord Jesus Christ" (line 7), the main verbs in the form of participles switch to Jesus as subject. It should also be pointed out that the *nu* may be a *lambda* with an extra vertical stroke, λ̣, or, there may be a phonetic confusion between the two liquids λ and ν.

The liturgical 'exorcism' in Pradel, *Gebete*, p. 260, line 18f. begins with a more 'standardized' version of this kerygmatic element: Θεὸς ὁ αἰώνιος ὁ λυτρωσάμενος ἐκ τῆς αἰχμαλωσίας τοῦ διαβόλου τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων; see also Louis Delatte, *Un Office byzantin d'Exorcisme* (Académie royale de Belqique, Mémoires, 52; Bruxelles, 1957), p. 38, 27f.; p. 74, 6f.: ... Κύριε, ὁ διὰ τοῦ μονογενοῦς σου υἱοῦ λυτρωσάμενος τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων. In the same text, Delatte, *Un office byzantin*, p. 64, 17, the phrase, Σύ, Κύριε, διὰ τούτων τῶν ἁγίων κολαστηρίων ("you Lord, through these holy punishments ...") refers to the suffering and crucifixion. Does the *P. Berol.* text refer to Christ's redemption? *The Supplementum ad Liturgiam S. Chrysostomi*, "A Prayer of Chrysostomus for Those Suffering from Demons," etc. (= Migne, *PG* 64C, p. 1061, from Goar, *Rituale Graecorum* [Paris, 1647, p. 583 [corr.]) gives a similar text, with numerous parallels from related liturgical *kerygmata* (e.g., p. 1064C / 1065B); cf. esp. *Orationes sive Exorcismi Magni Basilii* (= Migne, *PG* 31, §697, p. 1634A): ὁ τὰς δεσμευθείσας τῷ θανάτῳ ψυχὰς λύσας ... ὁ λύσας τὰς ὀδύνας ἡμῶν; see further, Commentary below, on the 'Sending of the Son.'

3-4 *The Sending of the Son.* The precise phrasing ὁ ἐξαποστίλας τὸν μονογε/νήν σου παῖδα (pap. πεδαν) does not correspond to any Biblical passage. The closest parallel is that of John 3:16-17 (οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν ... / οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν κτλ.; cf. John 1:14, 18). The motif of the Son having been sent (by God) is preserved in the logion of Matt. 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48. The use of παῖς

(either "servant" or "child") of Jesus seems to be special to older kerygmatic material found in the Book of Acts (3:13, 16; 4:27, 30). In a magical context, one may also compare *PGM* 5d.3f.: τὸν υἱὸν μονογενῆ περιβέβλημα[ι·, κτλ.]. The aorist participle, ὁ ἐξαποστ(ε)ίλας, continues a historiolae-sequence of a liturgical nature that begins with Christ's Pre-existence and mostly enumerates his miracles: *Redemption of Humankind (?), Sending (into the World), Virgin Birth, Walking on Water, Feeding of 5000*. The example from *PGM* 13, above, has a similar participial sequence, but is based on a chronological, rather than a miracle-based kerygmatic scheme: *Entrance into the World, Virgin Birth, Youth in Nazareth, Crucifixion, Rending of Temple Veil, Resurrection, Appearance, Ascension*, and so on.

In Pradel, *Gebete* (Comm. supra), p. 260, 1f. a similar formulaic verse comes at the very beginning of a related "catalogue" which, as here, is typified by the use of a set of participial phrases: ὁ πέμψας τὸν μονογενῆ υἱὸν τὸν κύριον ὑμῶν, κτλ. The order suggests that the two elements in the Berlin liturgical text should perhaps be reversed. In the *Didache* 9.3 a eucharistic formula similarly uses παῖς of Jesus (see Commentary. below, line 23).

4-5 *The Virgin Birth*. As with the rest of this text, the couplet καὶ ἐν λαγόσι παρθ[έ]/νου ἐνοικήσας finds no exact New Testament parallel. This element, however, does not narrate the Virgin Birth, per se, as much as the Divine Indwelling, as alluded to in the Biblical Annunciation (cf. Luke 1: 26-38). In Luke 1:30 Mary is said that she will "conceive in her womb", συλλήμψῃ τῇ γαστρί (cf. however Matt. 1:23, the *Christi nativitas*, proper). The notion of the Virgin being "indwelled" (ἐνοικήσας) by God may be a distant echo of Luke 1:35, where, however, it is said that the Holy Spirit will "come upon" (ἐπελεύσεται) Mary, and the power of the Highest will "overshadow" (ἐπισκιάσει) her. In the Berlin papyrus the subject of the verb "having indwelled" is God himself, the same as that of "having sent." *Sensu stricto*, the formula ἐνοικεῖν + ἐν means "to live in (the womb)." God the Father "lived in" the womb of Mary in the form of Jesus. Λαγών ("hollow"; "flanks") in the plural in late Greek means "womb". The word does not appear in the Biblical versions. Our text preserves an entirely independent textual witness, probably oral in derivation. Once again with the Berlin papyrus we have non-Biblical recollection of traditional Christian themes. For παρθένου, cf. Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:27, etc. The Cairo exorcism (*PGM* 13), cited above, contains the formula ὁ ἐλθὼν διὰ τοῦ Γαβριὴλ ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ τῆς Μαρία[ς], τῆς παρθένο[υ], κτλ., which stands more in line with the Biblical text.

5 τὸ γένος ἀνθρώπων: the putative *tau* is difficult to read, but looks

like it was squeezed in between the letters. Again, the material is non-Biblical. The overall formula appears in the Christian exorcisms cited above, Commentary line 2; see, further, Delatte, *Un office byzantin*, p. 61, 6f.: ὁ δωρησάμενος τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων. For the expression in pagan contexts, cf. *PGM* IX. 5: ... καταδούλωσον πᾶν γένος ἀνθρώπων. This parenthetical remark appears to be one of the antiphonal addresses discussed above that elsewhere in the text appear sometimes as interlinear glosses (cf. ἀν[θρώποις] in 1b). Its presence in the liturgy seems to acknowledge a doctrinal difficulty with understanding the nature of the concept of a virgin birth.

6-7 τὴν γένεσίν / σου: This is a faint echo of Matt. 1:18 (Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γένεσις οὕτως ἦν), which begins the pericope of the Virgin Birth; cf. Delatte, *Un office byzantin*, p. 73, 3f.: Καὶ σύ, Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, διὰ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως καὶ τῆς γεννήσεώς σου, κτλ. ("And you, O Lord Jesus Christ, through your becoming human and your birth").

7-8 *The Walking on the Water*. Although loosely based on the text of the New Testament (Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-52; John 6:16-21), the language here is different. Only the verb περιπατήσας echoes περιπατῶν in the Biblical text. Instead of ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων, the Gospel parallels have ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης. In the Pradel exorcism (*Gebete*), p. 265, line 9f., we read Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐπέβη εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν περιπατῶν, κτλ.; cf. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum*, p. 392, 7f.: κατ᾽ ἐκείνου γάρ σε ὁρκίζω, τοῦ περιπατήσαντος ὡς ἐπὶ ξηρᾶς ἐπὶ νῶτα θαλάσσης, κτλ. The reference in the Berlin papyrus to Jesus not "defiling" his feet is not in the Bible. The genitive of "feet" here following the verb is peculiar; the sense—if this is not a simple error for πόδας (see above)—must be that of "having defiled (himself) in respect of his feet." It is also possible, however, that ποδῶν has been influenced by ὑδάτων in the line above.

9-10 *The Feeding of the 5000*. Cf. Matthew 14:13-21 / Mark 6:32-44 / Luke 9:10-17 / John 6:1-15. Again, the phrase ὁ [ἐ]κ πέντε ἀρτῶν πεντακισχι/λίου<ς> ἄνδρας χορτάσας is not an exact quotation of any single New Testament verse (there is no mention of the two fish); cf. Mt. 14:19: τοὺς πέντε ἄρτους, κτλ. (cf. 14:17); John 6:13: ἐκ τῶν πέντε ἄρτων, etc. Mark 6:42's ἐχορτάσθησαν corresponds exactly to the wording of our text at line 10 (cf. Matt. 14:20), and Mark 6:44 (τοὺς ἄρτους πεντακισχίλιοι ἄνδρες) comes closest to the wording of lines 9f. of the papyrus; cf. the Johannine summary at John 6:26.

The whole of the preserved portion of the miracle *historiola* shows a loose chiastic arrangement in the first part, followed by a

parallelismus membrorum in the second (a syllabic count is provided in parentheses):

I

τὸν κολαζόμενον	(= 6 syll.)
ὁ λύσας [...]	(= 6 syll.?)
καὶ	
ὁ ἐξαποστείλας	(= 6 syll.)
τὸν μονογενῆ σου	(= 6 syll.)
παῖδα καὶ	(= 3 syll.)
ἐν λαγόσι	(= 4 syll.)
παρθένου	(= 3 syll.)
ἐνοικήσας·	(= 4 syll.)

II

ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων περιπατήσας	(= 12 syll.)
καὶ ποδῶν μὴ μολύνας	
ὁ ἐκ πέντε ἀρτῶν πεντακισχιλίους	(= 12 syll.)
ἄνδρας χορτάσας	

12 ἐλ[θ]ὲ κατὰ τὸ ἔλεό<ς> σου: This liturgical conclusion is a variant on the formula τὰ νῦν κ(ύρι)ε ἐλθὲ εἰς ἔλεος καὶ εὐμένειαν τῆς δούλης σου (τῆς δεῖνα) in both the Louvre and Wien liturgical amulets (cited above). An apparent variant also occurs in *PGM* 13.8: ἐλ[θ]έ, τὸ ἔλεο[ς], ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος. The use of the imperative "Lord, come!" (addressed to Jesus) is clearly eucharistic and originates in the famous "Maranatha" formula; cf. for the Eucharist, *Didache* 10:6. The original context of the liturgies addresses Jesus to come to the Eucharist in the form of the loaf, which becomes his body. The apparent reapplication of the formulas in the Louvre and Wien texts to healings—and in the Berlin text to exorcism—may be original to the liturgies themselves: ritual healing and exorcism were standard prerequisites for both baptism and Eucharist; see H. A. Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism* (Ithaca & London, 1985).

ἐπὶ ἐμοί τῷ ἁμαρτο῾λῷ΄: for a similar expression in a liturgical context, cf. Delatte, *Un office byzantin*, p. 70, 24: μοι τῷ ἁμαρτωλῷ; Strittmatter, *Exorzismusbüchlein*, p. 133, 14. The line separator seems to end with an abbreviation KOI, presumably for κοι(νά), an indication of where the practitioner is to insert the client's name, here the "sinner." Thus KOI is, in fact, to be read as a marginal abbreviation, written below τῷ ἁμαρτο῾λῷ΄. There also seem to be traces, including possibly a *mu*, at the beginning of the line. These, too,

are presumably interlinear corrections of the text of the lacuna, below.

II

Φιμωτικόν. Spells to silence legal opponents are rather more common in the Attic *defixionum tabellae* and later curse tablets. For the genre in the magical papyri, cf. *PGM* VII. 396-404 (a ritual requiring the inscribing of a lead curse-tablet); XLVI. 4-8 (an inscribing of a potsherd); cf. Th. Hopfner, "Ein neues θυμοκάτοχον. Über die sonstigen θυμοκάτοχα, κάτοχοι, ὑποτακτικά und φιμωτικά der griechischen Zauberpapyri in ihrem Verhaltnis zu den Fluchtafeln," *Arch. Or.* 10 (1938), 128-148.

14f. [? ἀνοίξα]τε μοι: [? ἀνοίξα]τε πάντα τὰ τίχη ... 15 [? ἀνοίξα]τε μοι ἡ τέ<σ>σαρες γωνίε, with left margins *in eisthesi*? The sense is obscure, unless one is to envision the opening up of spatial dimensions (walls or corners of heaven or the cosmos), by which the deity then enters through (supplying ἔλθατ]ε, οἱ φιμώσαντες, κτλ.).

15 ἡ τέ<σ>σαρες γωνίε: cf. *PGM* 15a 8-10: τὸ φῶς ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων γωνιῶν.

16 λέονταν / [καὶ δράκ]οντα: Who are they who have hushed the lion and the serpent? Is the reference to some strong gods who have silenced the power of the constellations of Leo and Draco? (cf. the citation on line 22 below). Here, though, the reference seems to be "sympathetic" in nature. Just as dangerous animals are "silenced," that is subjugated, so shall the practitioner's opponents. The defeat of the adversarial pairs "lion and serpent", who represent quintessential foes put "under foot" by God, by Jesus Christ, by Solomon, or some other saintly figure, is typical of Christian texts (cf. Pradel, *Gebete*, p. 288, p. 17f.; Delatte, *Un office byzantin*, p. 81, 8). Here, however, the plural subject argues for a more pagan origin. Although there is nothing Christian in the immediate context, the Christian material elsewhere in the formulary suggests that the writer may have identified the adversarial foes of lion and snake as the devil himself (cf. 1 Peter 5:8; 2 Timothy 4:17; Rev. 12:9, etc.).

17 φιμώσατε: cf. also *PGM* VII. 966; IX. 4, 9; etc.

18 [τοὺς ἐνα]ντίο[υ]ς μου ἐν τῇ σήμερον: for similar language in the papyri, see *Suppl. Mag.* II. 79, 29-31: ἐ[ναντι]/ώθητε ἐν τῇ σήμ[ερον ἡμέ]/ρᾳ, κτλ., although for closer parallels, the texts of leaden curse-tablets provide numerous examples. On temporal formulas, see Kotansky, *GMA* I.57, 19-21, with comm. p. 330.

.ερχετε: The present reading presents a conundrum. One expects,

perhaps, a form of ἔρχομαι (viz. ἔρχεται [αι = ε], "he comes" / "he will come"; or, [προ]σέρχεται?), although the singular belies the sense of the context, which addresses a plurality of walls, corners, and theriomorphic silencers. The text may simply be corrupt (read ἔρχε<σ>τε for ἔρχε<σ>θε ?). Other less likely possibilities include ἔρχαται (from ἔργω, here "to hinder; prevent" [?], an unexpected poetic verb), or some corrupt form of ἐργάζομαι (cf. ἐργῶμαι in *P. Cair. Zen.* 107.4, *ἐργᾶτα , indicating that the spell works?)

III

Fragmentary Hymn. The fragmentary section preserves portions of a hymnic invocation, although any trimeters or trochaic tetrameters are difficult, if not impossible to identify. The invocation, coupled as it is with the seeming astrological elements that proceed it, points to a practitioner who may be invoking the presence of the constellation of Draco. The invocation, then, may be part of an αὔτοπτος or σύστασις, as we have in *PGM* IV. 930-1114—spells that invoke the very presence of powerful stellar, or light-bearing, deities (see Comm. below).

20-21 τρέχουσα τὸν ἀέρα ... ἀστροδοῦχε ὀρεοδρ`ό´[με] (the last syllable of this word may, indeed, be part of the lacuna in the next line): cf. *PGM* III. 255/257: οὐροδρόμε ... ἐλθὲ ... ἀεροδρόμε Πύθιε Παιάν (= Hymn 12, in dactylic hexameters, Preisendanz-Henrichs, II, p. 247). The hapax ἀστροδοῦχε is supposedly an attempt at rendering ἀστρο + οὖχος (ἔχειν), for which perhaps *ἀστεροῦχε might have been more feasible (a euphonic *delta* does not seem morphologically tenable here); more likely, it is corrupt. No such form exists, although magic hymns do preserve examples such as ταρταροῦχε (voc.) in *PGM* IV. 2242, etc. (= Hymn 17, iambic trimeters, idem, p. 250); cf. further, δᾳδοῦχε in Hymn 20.32 (*idem*, p. 257 = *PGM* IV. 2522-2567), etc.; ἀλληλοῦχε in Hymn 22.3 (*idem*, p. 261), etc. Our texts ὀρεοδρ`ό´(με) may be a corruption of ἀεροδρόμε; however, it should be pointed out that ὀρειδρόμος is a special Dionysiac epithet (cf. Eurip. *Bacch.* 985), and in *Bacch.* 1018, 1019 Dionysus is urged to appear (φάνηθι) in the form of bull, dragon (δράκων), or lion (references courtesy Professor Michael Shaw).

22 ἐλθέ μοί δράκον: cf. *PGM* IV. 2786, for ἐλθέ μοί in dactylic meter (= Preisendanz, Hymn 18). In the example of *PGM* IV. 930-1114, the hymn invokes serpent and lion (δράκων ... λέων, line 939) in a context that suggests that the power of Draco and Leo are being called upon. For the invocation of the constellation of the Bear

(Ursa Minor) with its pole-star (Polaris), cf. *PGM* IV. 1275-1322; 1331-49; VII. 687-702; for the power of Zizaubio of the Pleiades, cf. *PGM* VII. 829. If δράκον is the subject of the feminine τρέχουσα in line 20, it too would have to be feminine (δράκαινα, "she-dragon"; cf. λέαινα, fem. of λέων). But such distinctions in the animal-kingdom are morphologically inconsistent in Greek (cf. ὁ/ἡ κύων; ὁ/ἡ ἵππος, etc.), since it is often difficult to differentiate gender in animals.

IV

Spell to Capture a Thief. The formulary of *Suppl. Mag.* II. 86 (= *P. Oxy.* LVI. 3835) is concerned exclusively with this genre, to which the editors compare *PGM* V. 70-95, 172-212 (see below); III. 479-494; GriffithThompson, *Demotic Magical Papyrus*, III. 29 (translation in Betz, *GMPT*, p. 200); Bell-Nock-Thompson, "Magical Texts from a Bilingual Papyrus," 244, col. vi (= Betz, *GMPT*. p. 288f.). All the examples in *Suppl. Mag.* II. 86 deal with methods to detect a thief (ὁ κλέψας / τὸν κλέπτην).

23-24 ΚΛΟΥΔΑ ὁ λαβὼν μὴ καταπεῖν: see the Commentary below on line 29. The syntax of this phrase and several of the others in the lines below make no sense; they may be corrupt, or the fault may rest in our own readings which must, at best, remain tentative. Assuming a cursive *Vorlage*, ΚΛΟΥΔΑ would appear to be a corruption of ΚΛΑΣΜΑ. Eucharistic overtones in this text are unmistakable; cf. Mark 6:43; 8:8, 19f. (and Synoptic parallels), where, however, this noun is reserved for the Feeding Miracles. In the *Didache* 7.3 (19), the rubric Περὶ δὲ τοῦ κλάσματος describes rituals of the Eucharist, in which context Jesus is addressed τοῦ παιδός σου (see line 4, above).

24 ὅτι ὁρκίζω ὑμᾶς, κτλ.: On the use of the adjuration, see Kotansky, "Remnants of a Liturgical Exorcism," pp. 145-147; Kotansky, "Greek Exorcistic Amulets," in Marvin Meyer & Paul Mirecki, edd. *Ancient Magic & Ritual Power* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 129 Leiden; E. J. Brill, 1995), 243-277. In the thief spell of *PGM* V. 70-95 we find a similar adjuration, but of "holy" names: ἐξορκίζω σε κατὰ τῶν ἁγίων ὀνομάτων, κτλ. (l. 175).

25-26 ερικισση · αεα · αραρα/χαραρα, κτλ.: this is a slight corruption of the *Erikisithphê-logos*, a famous palindrome; cf. *Suppl. Mag.* II, p. 19, on 54.1 (Commentary, with references); further, 55 A. 1-19; 57.1631, 39, etc. Here the formulary appears to provide only the first half of the palindrome (corrected: ερηκισιθφηαραχαραραη-φθισικηρε), with the added note τραψες, evidently some (corrupt?)

form of τρέπω (Dor. τράπω), "turn (it) back / around", the sense being that the palindrome is to be "run back" in the other direction. Despite this, there seems to be a series of indiscernible traces following the τραψεσ.

27 ιω παταθναξ ιω <απομψ ?> ἀποτρώγον: The usual *logos* is something like, ιω Ερβηθ ιω Πακερβηθ ιω Βολχοσηθ ιω Παταθναξ ιω Απομψ, or some such sequence (*PGM* XII. 370-371, 445-452, 459-462, 466-468; cf. *Suppl. Mag.* II. 95. 8-12, with add. refs.). Probably haplography with αποτρωγον—a meaningful Greek word—caused Απομψ to drop out. On this logos, see Paul Moraux, *Une Défixion Judicaire au Musée d'Istanbul* (Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres et des Sciences Morales et Politiques. Mémoires 54/2; Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1960).

τᾰ́δ' ἔτῐμα (sc. προκειμένα ?): The sense and reading are obscure; accordingly, the interpretation must remain tentative. Does the phrase refer to "preparations" that are being "nibbled", or does it stand alone as some kind of incipit? If the following phrase in line 28 begins a new spell, however, then τᾰ́δ' ἔτῐμα will end with line 27, despite the fact that there is no dividing line. Even if this is related to the preceding ἀποτρώγον, the context is uncertain. A ritual to detect a thief, like that of *PGM* V. 172-212 (esp. 181 + 211), seems to underlie the context as a whole (see discussion to follow).

28 τὸν κλέπτοντα πνιγῖν {ε} (leg. πνιγεῖν). The modest indentation suggests a title, "To choke a thief." The topos of "throttling" or grabbing the thief by the throat occurs in the thief formula of *PGM* V. 172-212 (*vide infra*), esp. lines 192-196: "I call upon Hermes, finder of thieves, (etc .) ... to grab the thief's throat (ἐπικρατῆσαι τὴν τοῦ φωρὸς κατάποσιν), and make him manifest this very day, this very hour!" The reading of πνιγεῖν looks rather like a case of the scribe having first written πνιγῖν, to which an *epsilon* was added in an attempt to emend the text as πνιγ`ε΄ῖν (viz. πνιγεῖν). What occurred instead was that the *epsilon* got copied at the *end* of the word, creating the distortion * πνιγιν`ε΄ (which eventually corrupted to the simple πνιγινε of our MS).

τὴν ὠράνην (leg. οὐράνην): This rare term for "chamberpot" (= ἀμίς) is unexpected. The noun is found only in Aeschylus, *Frag.* 42C 486a 2, 7; Sophocles, *Frag.* 565.1 (ap. Athenaeus, *Deipnosoph.* 1.30.7,12; cf. Eustathius, *Od.* 2.156.11, 13), of the "foul-smelling chamber pot" (τὴν κάκοσμον οὐράνην). One has to believe, therefore, that the original composer of our formulary has gleaned his reference from an anthology of Greek tragedians, or has read Athenaeus. Why a chamber pot would be singled out as an object

of theft is not clearly understood. The use of the present participle with τὴν οὐράνην to identify the thief suggests a "generic" act of stealing: "the man who steals the chamber pot," as if it were a common occurrence in late antique households.

29 μὴ κατα...γρη τὸν ἀρτάτυρον (l. ἀρτότυρον): the syntactical context and reference to the food item (cf. also the possible "nibbling" in ἀποτρώγον = ἀποτρώγων) is obscure, due to the lacunary nature of the text. Clearly some detail has been omitted. One may suggest, possibly, μὴ καταφάγ{ρ}ῃ, contrasting καταπινεῖν in 23f., but this is far from certain. Remarkably, the only other apparent reference in ancient literature to this "bread and cheese" foodstuff occurs in another formula, also to apprehend a thief (*PGM* V. 172-212), esp. line 181 (λόγος τοῦ ἀρτοτύρου). In this "bread / cheese" formula, the thief is to be pointed out (τὸν κλέπτην ἐμφανῆ ποιῆσαι, l. 185f. and "handed over" (παράδος φῶρ', ὃν ζητῶ, l. 210; cf. also lines 192-196, cited above). This is eventually enacted by means of a ritual involving the bread-cheese: "If any one of them does not eat (μὴ καταπίῃ τὸ δοθέν) what is given him, this one is the thief (ὁ κλέψας)." This suggests a context of diners, probably slaves, who would have been familiar to the victimized owner rather than unknown housebreakers who have run far away with the stolen goods. It is probable then that μὴ καταφάγ{ρ}ῃ (?) τὸν ἀρτάτυρον, in a manner similar to the spell of *PGM* V, identifies the thief who does not eat the bread-and-cheese. In line 23f. of this spell, the phrase κλάσμα (?!) ὁ λαβὼν, μὴ καταπεῖν might, somehow, refer to the same method of detection. On the whole "bread/cheese" ritual, cf. P. de Labriolle, "Artyrotyritae," *RAC* 1 (1950) 718-20.

30 ἤδη β΄ ταχ`ὺ΄ β΄: cf. *Suppl.Mag.* II. 92.18, with refs.

V

Spell for an Erection (?). The interpretation of the spell, overall, is uncertain. The reading would tend to confirm a spell for an erection, although the mention of a house is odd (see below, line 31). The same sort of brief sexual recipes (part of the genre of Παίγνια, "Jocular Recipes") are preserved in *PGM* VII. 167-185; *Suppl. Mag.* II. 83 (cf. II. 91); II. 76, the latter of which contains rather a spell to relax an erection (with reference to Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 1187b [cod. R], in the participle, ἀπεψωλημένος).

31 ψῳλῆς, κτλ.: Again, an unusual genitive as a rubric, "for an erect penis" (?). The original reading of the text here by Bill Brashear seems rather certain, despite the difficulties that follow. The genre of text is commonplace (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* II. 96.61, p. 249, with

references). With the mention of a house being sprinkled (below), on the other hand, one may expect, rather, a spell to dispel "fleas" (ψύλλα / ψύλλον), as suggested by David Jordan, who draws attention (*per litteras*) to the use of *Delphinium Staphisagria* as an insecticide in Mediterranean climates (M. Blamey & c. Grey-Wilson, *Mediterranean Wild Flowers* [London, 1993), p. 57, no. 261; O. Polunen, *Flowers of Europe* [Oxford, 1967], p. 99).

32 ῥάṿας ... οἰκίαν: Is one to read here τὴν οἰκίαν μικρᾰ́ν, τόπον, κτλ. or τὴν οἰκίαν, μικρὸν τόπον, κτλ.? The papyrus seems to read μικράν rather clearly, but "little house" (euphemism for penis?) is not attested (this would necessitate the emendation τὴν οἰκίαν <τὴν> μικράν). Assuming that "a little (μικρόν) place" is to be read, it is still one's house that is to be sprinkled. (The former reference would assume a reference to the "dribbling" or dripping of the liquid onto the penis itself, here called a "little house", an interpretation difficult, at best). Then, presumably, an area on the penis would to be left unsprinkled by the mixture. More likely, however, is that μικράν / -όν goes with τόπον: "and having sprinkled your house, leave a little place not sprinkled ..." (making a restoration, e.g., ἐπ[ὶ ψ]ῶ[λ]ῇ unlikely). On sprinkling, cf. *Suppl. Mag.* II. 97.2 (p. 261), with references.

VI

"*A Sacred Stele*". For the title, cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I 23.11 (ἁγία στήλη, with a depiction); 45.18; II 60.1. In *Suppl. Mag.* I, p. 65 (Comm. on 23.11), the editors distinguish two types of "stele" in the magic papyri: 1) a drawing (with or without writing); and 2) an inscribed charm.

ἔρδε καὶ προσκύλ[ισον: the first word is poetic and unexpected here. For sacrificial rituals in magic, cf. *Suppl. Mag.* II. 100, although the general sense may be merely to "do" or "perform" a rite. Προσκυλί[σον, an inevitable reading, is sufficiently rare, despite its appearance in the Gospels (Matt. 27:60; Mark 15:46; Luke 23:53 [*vario lectio*]; cf. Aristophanes, *Vesp.* 202; Polyaenus 2.31.3), to suggest the specific appropriation of poetic terms in this papyrus text. This, curiously, brings us full circle again to the possibility of ὀχλεύω in line 1.

TWO PAPYRI WITH FORMULAE FOR DIVINATION

David Jordan

Here I discuss two papyri, each with a formula for divination, whose published texts, in my view, admit of improvements.[1]

1. *"Great Isis the Lady"*
(Pl. 1)

Provenance: Oxyrhynchos. Present location: Egyptian Museum, Cairo.
Ed.pr.: B.P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt, *P.Oxy.* VI 886 (1906). Republications: Laudien 1912:29, no. 42 (*non vidi*). Milligan 1910:110f. Hopfner, *OZ* II 298f. Schubart, *PKunde* 172f., 369. *PGM* XXIVa. Discussion: Peterson 1926:223.
H. 0.213, W. 0.125 m. (↔). Virtually intact, with unusually wide margins, back blank. The hand (III^{p} or IV^{p}) is practiced and confident, with attention to conventions of book production: line 1 in *ecthesis*, the marks // at the left of 2 and 24.

Ed.pr.:

1 Μεγάλη Ἶσις ἡ κυρία.
2 ἀντίγραφον ἱερᾶς βί-
3 βλου τῆς εὑρετίσης ἐν
4 τοῖς τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ ταμίοις.
5 ὁ δὲ τρόπος ἐστὶν τὰ περ[ὶ]
6 τὰ γράμματα κθ΄
7 δι᾽ ὧν ὁ Ἑρμῆς κὲ ἡ Ἶσις
8 ζητοῦσα ἑαυτῆς τὸν ἀ-
9 δελφὸν κὲ ἄνδρα Ὄ-
10 σιρειν. ἐπικαλοῦ μὲ[ν (?)]
11 τὸν (ἥλιον) κὲ τοὺς ἐν βυ-
12 θῷ θεοὺς πάντας πε-
13 ρὶ ὧν θέλις κληδονισ-
14 θῆναι. λαβὼν φύνι-
15 κος ἄρσενος φύλλα κθ΄
16 ἐπίγρ(αψον) ἐν ἑκάστῳ τῶν
17 φύλλων τὰ τῶν θεῶν
18 ὀνόματα κὲ ἐπευξά-
19 μενος ἐρε κατὰ δύο
20 δύο, τὸ δὲ ὑπολιπό[μ]ε-
21 νον ἔσχατον ἀναγνῶ-
22 τι κὲ εὑρήσις σου τὴν κλη-
23 δόνα ἐν οἷς μέτεστειν
24 καὶ χρηματισθήσῃ τῃ-
25 λαυγῶς.

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[1] I am grateful to the Trustees of Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, for their permission to publish the photograph of *P.Harris* 55.

1. ϊσις Pap.; so in l. 7. 3. l. εὑρεθείσης. 7. l. καί: so in ll. 9, 11, 18, 22. 9. οκιρειν΄ Pap. 14. l. φοίνικος. The κ has been inserted later. 17. θεω Pap. 19. l. αἶρε 19-20. δυο΄ δυο΄ Pap. 20. ὑπολιπο[μ]ενον Pap. 21. l. ἀναγνῶθι. 24. l. χρηματισθήσῃ.

"Great is the Lady Isis. Copy of a sacred book found in the archives of Hermes. The method is concerned with the 29 letters used by Hermes and Isis when searching for her brother and husband Osiris. Invoke the sun and all the gods in the deep concerning those things about which you wish to receive an omen. Take 29 leaves of a male palm, and inscribe on each of the leaves the names of the gods; then after a prayer lift them up two by two, and read that which is left at the last, and you will find wherein your omen consists, and you will obtain an illuminating answer."

The text invites a few comments.

1. "Great is the Lady Isis." All translators but Hopfner ("Die große Isis, die Herrscherin"), follow the *ed.pr.*, which had no comment here. Milligan cited as a parallel "a stock phrase of Artemis-worship" at *Acts* 19.28, μεγάλη ἡ (*om.* ἡ ***D*****pc*) Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων, and Preisendanz referred to this phrase and to a discussion by Peterson, who, after several not particularly relevant examples of acclamations of the type Εὐτυχῶς τοῖς νυμφίοις, states, without argumentation, that "wenn das Zauberbüchlein P. Oxyrh. VI 886 ... also anhebt: μεγάλη Ἶσις ἡ κυρία, so haben wir hier eine akklamatorische ... Eingangsformel vor uns." In the majority text of the New Testament, however, we may note that the position of μεγάλη is predicative position, while in the papyrus it is attributive; the New Testament phrase is not a perfectly useful parallel. One should understand the line as Hopfner does: "Great Isis the Lady." The papyrus phrase occurs elsewhere, though, in a graffito on the Monte della Giustizia in Rome (Brizio, Anon. 1873:36), εἷς Ζεὺς Σάραπις / μεγάλη Ἶσις ἡ κυρία. Its "One Zeus Sarapis" does seem to be an acclamation: at the end of an invocation of the Sun at *PGM* IV 1596-715, the operant, if successful, is to utter the phrase (*cf.* the obscure Πουβλικιανέ, εἷς Ζεὺς Σάραπις, ἐλέησον, *IG* XIV 2413.3, on a gold amulet from Rome). Whether or not, properly speaking, the second line of the graffito is also an acclamation, "Great Isis the Lady," at least in the papyrus, is certainly the title of the recipe: it is set off from the rest of the text by a blank area, and it stands in *ecthesis*. It may be compared with the title Γραῦς Ἀπολλωνίου Τυανέως ὑπηρετίς of the spell that makes up *PGM* XIa: like the old assistant of Apollonios of Tyana, Isis was a magician, and below in the Oxyrhynchos papyrus (7-10) we learn that the magical operation is one from which she actually benefitted.

5.-6. As the printed text of the *ed.pr.* suggests and as the photograph shows, the letters κθ are written somewhat to the right of the rest of the line and are no doubt a later note, perhaps a gloss, by our scribe or another. In other words, the original sense must have been independent of the two letters. What remains, ὁ δὲ τρόπος ἐστὶν τὰ περ[ὶ] / τὰ γράμματα, is not very smooth Greek and does not explain the operation, which uses 2*n* (κατὰ δύο δύο) + 1 leaves, each inscribed with presumably one letter—in other words, it uses an odd number of letters. (That there are 29 letters suggests the Coptic alphabet, as Hopfner noted, offering as examples ⲁ = ⲁⲛⲟⲧⲡ or ⲁⲙⲟⲧⲛ, ⲃ = ⲃⲏⲥⲁ, etc.) The Greek adjective that expresses "an odd number of" is περιττός: *cf.* Arist. *Inc.Anim.* 708b6ff. ὅσα δὲ πολύποδά ἐστιν, οἷον αἱ σκολόπενδραι, τούτοις δυνατὸν μὲν καὶ ἀπὸ *περιττῶν* ποδῶν πορείαν γίνεσθαι, καθάπερ φαίνεται ποιούμενα καὶ νῦν, ἄν τις αὐτῶν ἕνα πηρώσῃ τῶν ποδῶν, "Polypods, however, like the Centipede, can indeed make progress on *an odd number of* limbs, as may be seen by the experiment of wounding one of their limbs" (transl. A.S.L. Farquharson, my emphasis). Restore and translate: ὁ δὲ τρόπος ἐστὶν τὰ περ[ιτ]/τὰ γράμματα—κθ′, "The method is the odd number of letters (*i.e.* 29)."

7.-10. The smooth paraphrase of δι᾽ ὧν ὁ Ἑρμῆς κὲ ἡ Ἶσις ζητοῦσα ἑαυτῆς τὸν ἀδελφὸν κὲ ἄνδρα Ὄσιρειν in the *ed.pr.* disguises the fact that certainly one verb and possibly two have disappeared. Better: "through which Hermes ⟨*e.g.* performed divination, ἐκληδονίσατο *vel sim.*⟩ and Isis, searching, ⟨found, ἐξεῦρεν⟩ her own brother and husband Osiris." ⟨ἐξεῦρεν⟩ is Hopfner's suggestion, *loc.cit.*

10.-14. *Ed.pr.*: "The vestiges following μ suit ε better than α. μέ[ν is not very satisfactory, and ἐπικαλοῦμαι constantly occurs in magical formulae of this character ...; but to read ἐπικαλοῦμε (= ἐπικαλοῦμαι) here makes the change to the second person singular in l. 13 very difficult." I have not found elsewhere in the magical papyri the imperative ἐπικαλοῦ "invoke." If we assume that after 7-10 a bit more is missing, the difficulty is easily resolved: ⟨Λέγε·⟩ «ἐπικαλοῦμε (for -μαι) ... θεοὺς πάντας»—περὶ ὧν θέλις κληδονισθῆναι, "⟨Say:⟩ 'I invoke the Sun and all the gods in the deep'—about whatever you wish to receive an omen." Abbreviations of words related to λόγος being frequent in the magical papyri we may wonder if the model of our text had such an abbreviation (*e.g.* ἓ for λέγε), which was misunderstood and then ignored.

16. Something may have dropped out of the Greek here as well, for obviously only one divine name, not τὰ τῶν θεῶ(ν) ὀνόματα, is to be written on each leaf.

Revised text:

P.Oxy. VI 886 (*PGM* XXIVa) H. 0.213, W. 0.125 m III^{p} or IV^{p}

1 Μεγάλη Ἶσις ἡ κυρία.
2 // Ἀντίγραφον ἱερᾶς βί-
3 βλου τῆς εὑρετίσης ἐν
4 τοῖς τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ ταμίοις.
5 Ὁ δὲ τρόπος ἐστὶν τὰ περ[ιτ-]
6 τὰ γράμματα {κθ΄},
7 δι᾽ ὧν ὁ Ἑρμῆς ⟨*e.g.* ἐκληδονίσατο⟩ κὲ
ἡ Ἶσις
8 ζητοῦσα ⟨ἐξεῦρεν⟩ ἑαυτῆς τὸν ἀ-
9 δελφὸν κὲ ἄνδρα Ὄ-
10 σιριν. ⟨Λέ(γε)·⟩ «Ἐπικαλοῦμε
11 τὸν (Ἥλιον) κὲ τοὺς ἐν βυ-
12 θῷ θεοὺς πάντας»—πε-
13 ρὶ ὧν θέλις κληδονισ-
14 θῆναι. Λαβὼν φύνι-
15 κος ἄρσενος φύλλα κ῾΄
16 ἐπίγρ(αψον) ἐν ἑκάστῳ τῶν
17 φύλλων τὰ τῶν θεῶ(ν)
18 ὀνόματα κὲ ἐπευξά-
19 μενος ἓρε κατὰ δύο
20 δύο. Τὸ δὲ ὑπολιπό[μ]ε-
21 νον ἔσχατον ἀναγνῶ-
22 τι κὲ εὑρήσις σου τὴν κλη-
23 δόνα ἐν οἷς μέτεστειν
24 // καὶ χρηματισθήσῃ τη-
25 λαυγῶς.

3 εὑρεθείσης 4 ταμείοις 7 ⟨*e.g.* ἐκληδονίσατο⟩ *ego* καί 8 ⟨ἐξεῦρεν⟩ Hopfner 9/10 Ὄσιριν 10 ⟨Λέ(γε)·⟩ *ego* ἐπικαλοῦμαι 11 καί 13 θέλεις 14/15 φοίνικος 17 θεω pap. 18 καί 19 αἶρε 20/21 ὑπολειπόμενον 21/22 ἀναγνῶθι καὶ εὑρήσεις 23 μέτεστιν 24 χρηματισθήσῃ

"*Great Isis the Lady*. Copy of a sacred book found in the archives of Hermes. The method is the odd number of letters {*i.e.* 29}, through which Hermes ⟨received omens⟩ and Isis, searching, ⟨found⟩ her own brother and husband Osiris. ⟨Say:⟩ 'I invoke the sun and all the gods in the deep'—about whatever you wish to receive an omen. Taking 29 leaves of a male palm, write on each of the leaves (one of) the names of the gods and, when you have said a prayer, pick them up two by two. Read the last remaining leaf, and you will find wherein your omen consists, and you will receive an omen lucidly."

2. *An invocation of the Almighty* (Pl. 2)

Provenance unknown. Present location: Orchard Learning Resources Centre, Woodbrooke College, Birmingham.
Ed. pr.: J.E. Powell, *P.Harris* 55 (1936). Republication: *PGM* LXXVII. Discussion: Eitrem 1937:103-4
H. 0.20, W. 0.075 m. (↔). All sides intact, but some loss of surface in the middles of 15-20. Letters: "elegant second-century cursive" (Powell).

Ed.pr.:

ἐὰν θέλῃς χρηματισθῆ-
ναι περὶ οὗτινος θέλις πρά-
γματος, λέγε [τοῦ]τον ⟨τὸν⟩ λόγον
θυμῷ, μηδὲν λαλήσας,
ἐπὶ καχυμμέτῃ μέσον
μέρος ἀρούρης καθήμενο¯·
ὁ ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τὰ πάντα
διοικῶν, ὃν τρέμουσιν οἱ δαί-
μονες, ὃν τὰ ὄρη φοβεῖται,
ὃν προσκυνοῦσιν ἄγγελοι,
ὃν προσκυνῖ ἥλιος καὶ σελή-
νη, οὗ ἐστιν ὁ οὐρανὸς θρό-
νος καὶ ἔθρα κωμαστήριο,
ἡ δὲ γῆ τὸ πόδιον ἴου ἴου
ορορα[ ]θομαρα
αραβρω[ ] ἰου ἰου
ἄγιε[ ]ἀπέρατε,
ἀπερα[τε]ἀστροθέτα,
π...π[ ]θην[
πεδι...[κε]χρημάτισῴ-
μαι, ἀφόβως, ἀδρώως εὔδη-
λον χρημῴατιεῷῖῷ περὶ τοῦ δῆ-
να προῷ ἀγέῴλῴαστος ~~X~~
ἀγνὸς δὲ ποίει καὶ λίβανον
ἐπίθυε εἰς τὸν τόπον.

13. l. αἴθρα. 22. l. δεῖνα

"If you wish to hold commerce about any matter you like, recite this formula mentally, without saying anything sitting on a ... in the middle of a field: 'Thou that in thy might governest all things, before whom the demons tremble, whom the mountains fear, whom the angels adore, whom the sun and the moon adore, whose seat is heaven, the air thy revelling-place, and the earth thy footstool ... (magic words) ... with thee have I had commerce(?)'. Then hold commerce with him fearlessly, plainly and clearly, about what matter soever. Do not smile. Perform the rite when purified, and burn incense upon the spot."

Shortly after the publication, Eitrem was able to make two suggestions, that the impossible ἐπὶ καχυμμέτῃ in 5 is likely to mask ἐπὶ καλύμματι, and that one should transcribe ἀδρόμως in 21 and assume this to be a misspelling of ἀτρόμως "untremblingly." He compared *PGM* XII 55 ἐνφόβους, ἐντρόμους. Preisendanz's text, which he had intended to appear in 1941 in the third volume of *PGM* and which I give here with his *app.crit.* and translation, is substantially better than the *ed.pr.*

1 Ἐὰν θέλῃς χρηματισθῆ-
2 ναι περὶ οὗτινος θέλεις πρά-
3 γματος, λέγε [τοῦ]τον ⟨τὸν⟩ λόγον
4 θυμῷ, μηδὲν λαλήσας·
5 «ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε μέσον
6 μέρος ἀρούρης καθήμενον,
7 ὁ ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τὰ πάντα
8 διοικῶν, ὃν τρέμουσιν οἱ δαί-
9 μονες, ὃν τὰ ὄρη φοβεῖται,
10 ὃν προσκυνοῦσιν ἄγγελοι,
11 ὃν προσκυνεῖ ἥλιος καὶ σελή-
12 νη, οὗ ἐστιν ὁ οὐρανὸς θρό-
13 νος καὶ αἴθρα κωμαστήριον,
14 ἡ δὲ γῆ τὸ πόδιον ἰου ἰου
15 αφαρα[ ]θομαρα
16 αραβρω[ ] ἰου ἰου
17 ἅγιε, [ἅγιε], ἀπέρατε,
18 ἀπερατ[ε], ἀστροθέτα,
19 π[υρί]π[νοε, σαν]θην[ωρ, χρυσο-]
20 πέδι[λε θεέ], χρημάτισ[ον».]
21 καὶ ἀφόβως, ἀτρόμως εὔδη-
22 λον χρηματιεῖ περὶ τοῦ δεῖ-
23 να πράγματος ἀγελάστως.
24 ἁγνὸς δὲ ποίει καὶ λίβανον
25 ἐπίθυε εἰς τὸν τόπον.

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1 θελις P 3 erg. Pow. 4 λέγε ἀτόνῳ φθόγγῳ IV 474f. 5 επικαχυμμετη l. Pow. ἐπὶ καλύμματι Eitr., Symb. Osl. 17, 104 ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε Pr 6 s. IV 3023, XIV 8, Ps. 147.5,[16] καθημενο⁻ P. 7 s. V 465, XIII 743, 753 8 δεμονες P. s. IV 358, 2541, 2828 XIII 765 9 φοβῖται P. s. IV 3074 11 -κυνι P. s. XII 118 XIII 844 O 3, 6; z. Folg. s. XIII 771-774 XII 243 XXI 6-10 13 εθρα κωμαστηριο P. 14 γῆ ὑποπόδιον? 15 s. οραρω IV 1939 18 s. XII 175 19 erg. Pr s. IV 592, 590; 1292 πυρίπνοε s. Ho: Pisc. 137 20 erg. Pr χρημάτιῳ/μαι l. Pow. (κεχρημάτισμαι Pow.), χρημάτισ[ον] καὶ Pr (s. VII 248) 21 αδρωως l. Pow. ἀτρόμως Eitr εὔδηλον zu χρηματισον od. χρηματιεῖ? 'tu (daemo) oraculum dabis' Eitr 22f. δῆνα προ P δεῖνα πράγματος Pr αγελαστος P s. Eitrem z. Stelle. Nach αγελ. Schlußzeichen (Stern) in P

"Wenn du eine Offenbarung haben möchtest, worüber du willst, sag dieses Gebet in Gedanken, ohne zu sprechen: 'Ich rufe dich an, der du in der Mitte des Saatfeldes sitzt, der du durch deine Macht das All verwaltest, vor dem die Dämonen zittern, den die Berge fürchten, den die Engel, den Sonne und Mond anbeten, dessen Thron der Himmel, dessen Lager die Luft und dessen Fußschemel die Erde ist (ZW). Heiliger, [Heiliger], Unendlicher, Unendlicher, Sternenordner, [Feuerhauchender?] (ZW) [golden]beschuhter [Gott?], offenbare'. Und dann wird er über die betr. Sache in alter Klarheit, ohne Anlaß zu Furcht und Zittern und Spott offenbaren. Vollzieh in reinem Zustand die Handlung und opfere Weihrauch auf der Stätte."

It is difficult to know whether Preisendanz' improvements come from inspection of a photograph (or even from autopsy) or are *ex ingenio*, for in 15 he offers αφαρα[for Powell's οραρα[in the *vox magica* there; this seems to imply some independent knowledge of the papyrus, even if the photograph favors αραρα[. On the other hand, Preisendanz considered as conjectural his own ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε and γῆ ὑποπόδιον for Powell's ἐπὶ καχυμμέτῃ in 5 and γῆ τὸ πόδιον in 14, but he would have

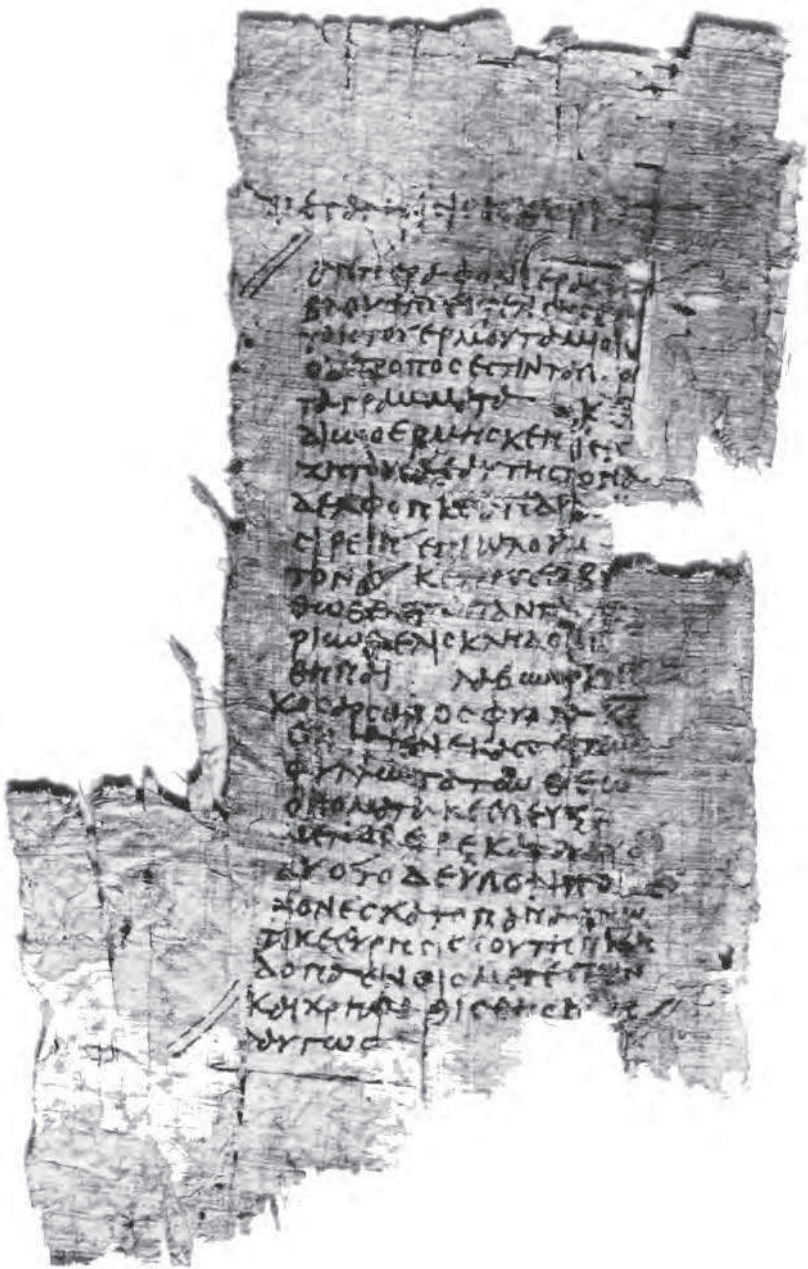

Plate 1

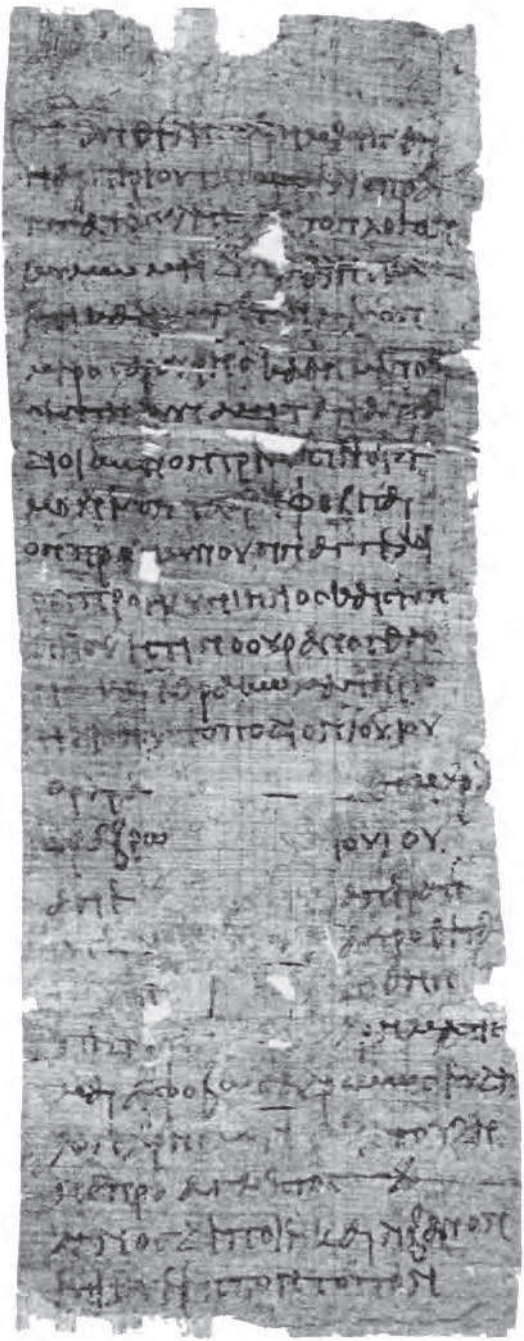

Plate 2

seen in the photograph that both phrases stand on the papyrus; and he probably would have easily seen that there is no room in 23 for both αγελαcτοc and his conjectured πραγματοc and that the lengths of some of the supplements that he proposed for the lacunae are impossible.

Even though he read ἡ δὲ γῆ τὸ πόδιον in 14, Powell noted that the phrase was similar to one in a passage at LXX *Isaiah* 66.1; with the correct reading ὑποπόδιον, we see that we in fact have in 12-13 and 14 direct quotations from Isaiah: Οὕτως λέγει κύριος· *Ὁ οὐρανός μοι θρόνος, ἡ δὲ γῆ ὑποπόδιον* τῶν ποδῶν μου "thus says the Lord: 'for me heaven is a throne, and the earth a footstool for my feet.'" The Christian proto-martyr Stephen quotes the sentence in his defence before the council at Jerusalem (*Acts* 7.49), and to presumably less learned audiences Jesus could allude to it, both in the Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew* 5.4), in which he says, "do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by earth, for it is a footstool for his feet (μήτε ἐν *τῷ οὐρανῷ*, ὅτι *θρόνος ἐστὶν τοῦ Θεοῦ*, μήτε ἐν *τῇ γῇ*, ὅτι *ὑποπόδιόν ἐστιν τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ*)," and in the "Whited Sepulcher" sermon (23.22), "he who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God."

Somewhat intrusive in this imagery from Isaiah is the κωμαστήριον "dancing-floor" of 13. In Egypt—and I have found the word nowhere else—it was a place for the village κωμασταί to welcome the coming of an Egyptian god. In three passages in the magical papyri, we find that the Almighty has an "eternal dancing-floor" (ἀένναον κ.: *PGM* XII 252, XIII 774, XXI 10), and, in three other passages, that "heaven became his dancing-floor (ᾧ οὐρανὸς ἐγένετο κ.: IV 1628, XII 183, an unpublished formulary), but our text is, so far, unique in placing the dancing-floor simply in the "air." Something has obviously gone wrong. In XII, as part of the invocation that includes mention of the "eternal dancing-floor," we find, among the attributes of the Almighty, οὐρανὸς μὲν κεφαλή, αἰθὴρ δὲ σῶμα, γῆ πόδες. This phrase, I would hazard, may be the source of the mistake; presumably the composer or the copyist of the model of our text began with the quotation from Isaiah and then, under the influence of the phrase "heaven the head, air the body," etc., inserted a word for air (his αἴθρα); may he have then realized that "body" (σῶμα) has no natural place between "throne" and "footstool," and supplied a word that begins with a similar sound (κωμαστήριον), familiar from celestial imagery?

For the *voces magicae* that immediately follow the reference to God's footstool I have no parallels that would allow restorations,[2] but the

[2] We may wonder whether the syllables θομαρα/αραβρω may have some connection with the frequentie found θωβαρραβαυ, which R.D. Koansky (1994) would interpret as Hebrew phrase that came to be used as a *vox magica*.

space available in the lacuna in 17 suggests that Isaiah may have been the source there too. At LXX *Isaiah* 6.1-3 we read: "... and I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up; and the house was full of his glory. And the seraphim stood around him.... And they cried out one to another and said "Holy holy holy, lord of hosts, all the earth is full of thy glory (ἅγιος ἅγιος ἅγιος κύριος Σαβαωθ, πλήρης πᾶσα ἡ γῆ τῆς δόξης σου)." As a restoration ἅγιε, [ἅγιε, ἅγιε] is virtually inevitable,[3] and there is room in the lacuna for the expected full triad, ἀπέρατε, / ἀπέρατ[ε, ἀπέρατε], even though, as far as I know, no religious or magical text is yet quotable with this latter phrase.

Almost equally rare is the ἀστροθέτα of 18, the noun being found elsewhere only in an Orphic hymn (64.2). As for 19-20, the little that is preserved of Preisendanz' π[υρί]π[νοε in 19 invites agnosticism, the photograph shows that there is no room for the restoration [ωρ, χρυσο] later in the line, and the preserved traces rule out the πέδι[λε θεέ] of 20. Having rejected Powell's κε]χρημάτιϲ/μαι in favor of his own χρημάτισ[ον.'] / καί in 20-21, Preisendanz, in his *app.crit.*, wonders how to fit εὔδηλον into the construction. The invocation runs in fact from 5 until the long punctuating mark at the end of 23; it includes the claim that "I have requested" (reading κε]χρημάτιϲ/μαι with Powell), "without fear or trembling, a clear oracle" (εὔδηλον χρησμόν rather than the editors' ε. χρηματιεῖ). In this he can take some pride, for he has calmly addressed the Almighty, "before whom the demons tremble, whom the mountains fear." The silent speaker is to add, as part of the invocation, the subject of his inquiry (περὶ τοῦ δῆνα προάγματος for δεῖνα πράγμ.); we find other silent or whispered incantations at *PGM* IV 475, 1271-73 (see Kapsomenakis 1938:58), LXX 23 (see Jordan, forthcoming), and LXXVII 3-4.

The gravity or gloom of the silent speaker is, however, a ghost. The papyrus has a misspelling that I have not seen before, προάγματος for πράγματος, but the transcription is unavoidable: there is no ἀγέλαστος. Let him be happy in what he has just done.

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[3] We do find "holy" twice, not thrice, as an epithet of God in a 4th- or 5th-century Christian prayer at *PGM* 13.7, ἅγιος ἅγιος ὁ βασιλεύς τοῦ αἰῶνος, "holy holy is the king of the age," but the next phrase, διὸ οἱ οὐρ[αν]οὶ εκορέσθησαν τῆς θειότητος αὐτοῦ, "for the heavens are full of his divinity," so strongly suggests Isaiah's vision as a source of the whole passage that I am tempted to emend in ἅγιος ἅγιος ⟨ἅγιος⟩.

Revised edition:

P.Harris 55 (*PGM* LXXVII) H. 0.020, W. 0.075 II^{p}

1 Ἐὰν θέλις χρηματισθῆ-
2 ναι περὶ οὗτινος θέλις πρά-
3 γματος, λέγε [τοῦ]τον ⟨τὸν⟩ λόγον,
4 θυμῷ, μηδὲν λαλήσας·
5 «Ἐπικαλοῦμαί σε μέσον
6 μέρος ἀρούρης καθήμενο(ν),
7 ὁ ἐν τῇ δυνάμι τὰ πάντα
8 διοικῶν, ὃν τρέμουσιν οἱ δέ-
9 μονες, ὃν τὰ ὄρη φοβῖται,
10 ὃν προσκυνοῦσιν ἄγγελοι,
11 ὃν προσκυνῖ Ἥλιος καὶ Σελή-
12 νη, οὗ ἐστιν ὁ οὐρανὸς θρό-
13 νος καὶ ἔθρα κωμαστήριο(ν),
14 ἡ δὲ γῆ ὑποπόδιον. Ιου ιου
15 Αραρα[——c.11——]θομαρα-
16 αραβρω[——c.8——] ιου ιου
17 Ἅγιε [ἅγιε ἅγιε,] ἀπέρατε
18 ἀπέρατ[ε ἀπέρατε,] ἀστροθέτα
19 π[—c.3—]π[——c.9——]$^{?\,?}$θην[αι]
20 πεδίον [—c.3—]. Κε]χρημάτισ-
21 μαι ἀφόβως, ἀδράμως εὔδη-
22 λον χρησμὸν περὶ τοῦ δῆ-
23 να προάγματος» ——X——.
24 Ἁγνὸς δὲ ποίει καὶ λίβανον
25 ἐπίθυε εἰς τὸν τόπον.

2 θέλῃς 6 καθημενο⁻ *pap.* 7 δυνάμει 8/9 δαίμονες 9 φοβεῖται 11 προσκυνεῖ 13 αἴθρα 21 ἀτρόμως 22/23 δεῖνα πράγματος

"If you want to request an oracle about anything you want, say this *logos* in your heart, pronouncing nothing (aloud). 'I invoke thee who sittest in the middle of the desert (?), who in (thy) might) orderest all things, before whom the demons tremble, whom the mountains fear, whom angels worship, whom Sun and Moon worship, for whom Heaven is a throne and ether a *kômastêrion*, and Earth a footstool. IOU IOU ARARA[——]THOMARAARABRÔ[——] IOU IOU. Holy holy holy, infinite infinite infinite, arranger of the stars [magical words?] ——. Without fear or trembing have I requested a clear oracle about this thing (whatever).' Do this in a state of purity and burn frankincense at the spot."

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AN EARLY CHRISTIAN GOLD *LAMELLA* FOR HEADACHE

Roy Kotansky
Santa Monica, CA

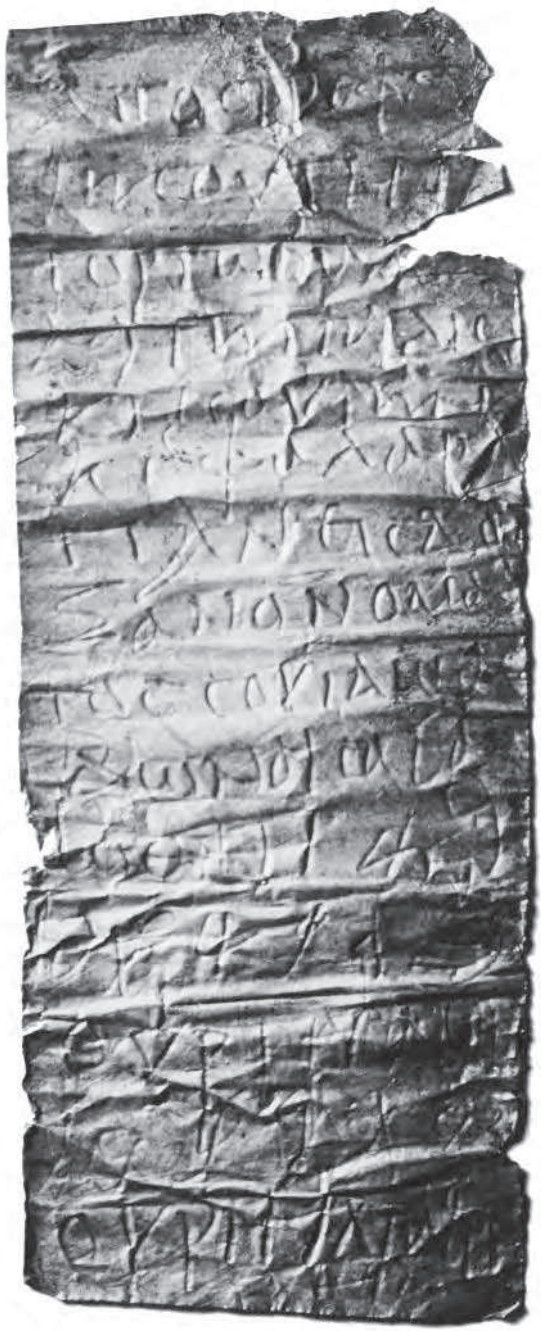
The engraved gold *lamella* published in this volume for the first time honors in a small way the enduring memory of William Brashear whose untimely passing on February 3, 2000 represents a catastrophic loss to the academic world. A great mentor, colleague, fellow *mage*, and friend, Bill's contribution to the science of magical studies, papyrology, and higher learning in general, will be profoundly and irrevocably missed. The tiny leaf of precious metal (H. 6.35 cm.; W. 2.50 cm.) offered here is said to have come from Asia Minor or Syria, although its exact provenance is not known. Palaeographically, it can be assigned to the early 2nd century CE. Formerly in the hands of a Belgrade dealer, the piece now belongs in a private collection in London, whose owner has cordially allowed me to present it here. The transcript produced below represents results from an *autopsia* of the original made on several separate occasions. An earlier, provisional reading of the piece was also presented at the 1989 XIX International Congress of Papyrology in Ain-Shams University Cairo, Egypt.

I would also like to take the occasion to thank the participants in the Orange magical conference for an abundance of helpful comments and fruitful dialogue in the course of explicating this short but difficult text (see Fig. 1 and photo).

Translation

*Turn away, O Jesus, the Grim-Faced One, and on behalf of your maidservant, her headache, to (the) glory of your name, IAŌ ADŌNAI SABAŌTH, III ***, OURIĒL ***, {OURIĒL}, GABRIĒL.*

The text is largely intact, although there is a slashing tear in the upper right side that is probably ancient since it does not directly interfere with the written text; however, the readings at the ends of lines **2-3**, in the general environment of this tear, are not at all certain. How much of this is due to erasure, damage, or the scribe having to work around the damage, remains unclear. The slip had been folded 17-18 times horizontally and then once vertically to be



Text

ἀπόστρεφε,
Ἰησοῦ, τὴν
Γοργῶπα [ῃ..]
καὶ τῇ παιδίσ-
κῃ σου, τὴν
κεφαλαρλ-
γίαν εἰς δό-
ξαν ὀνόμα-
τός σου, Ἰάω Ἀ-
δωναὶ Σαβα-
ώθ, ι ι ι [*erasure* ?]
[ο . . . . .]
Ὀυριήλ *traces* [*erased*]
[π ι ρ . . ω]
Οὐριήλ, Γαβρι-
ήλ.

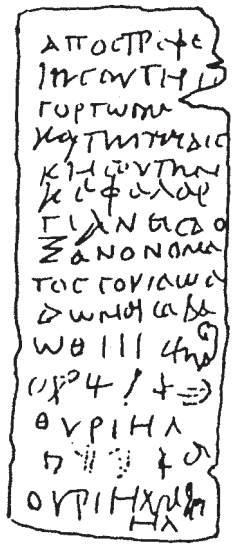


Fig. 1 (1:1)

7-8 κεφαλαρλ/γίαν: κεφαλαλ/γίαν

inserted into a (lost?) capsule or to be worn simply as an exposed packet.

The scribe who copied this spell presumably used a bronze stylus. The overall hand, tending towards the cursive, is an upright bookish style typical of the early second century CE. Several erasures and slight traces of a previous underlying text suggests an earlier draft which the scribe did not always carefully follow. Evidence for his text having "drifted" astray, for instance, becomes more evident in the second half of the text, especially beginning with **10-16**. Here there appear to be remnants of "ghost" images to the lettering, especially in line **10**. Thereafter, matters begin to disintegrate considerably. What appear to be magical *charactères* in **11**, **12**, the end of **13**, and **14** are, in fact, the residua of the previous text, erasured, and/or text badly copied over. It is difficult to determine what exactly transpired in lines **12** and **14**, in particular, as this looks like scribbled out, obliterated readings. Similarly, the second part of line **11**, with the series of three or four vertical marks (*iota*'s ?), terminates in an elaborate scrawling design that may represent an erasure, undecipherable text in ligature, or a kind of 'line-filling' patterned writing typical of papyrus texts. One suspects that, given the apparent duplication in ΟΥΡΙΗΛ / ΟΥΡΙΗΛ, the garbled lines in **11/12**, **14** preserved similarly

duplicated angel-names: perhaps the end of **11** contained the first part of ΓΑΒ(ΡΙΗΛ), scribbled out. The same may even have occurred at the end of line **13**. ΓΑΒΡΙ/ΗΛ seems to have been finalized at the end of **15/16**, with the terminal -ηλ, neatly centered at the bottom of the tablet. Similarly, ΟΥΡΙΗΛ was perhaps written in **12** or **14**, but these readings had been aborted. The absence of ΡΑΦΑΗΛ, the angel of healing *par excellence*, leads one to question the integrity of the text at this point: a triadic Ῥαφαήλ, Οὐριήλ, Γαβριήλ would have been particularly appropriate. The triadic sequence of **9-11** is also noteworthy: Ἰάω Ἀδωναὶ Σαβαώθ should have been written Ἰάω Σαβαώθ Ἀδωναὶ (= "Lord God of Hosts"). Such eccentricities casts some doubt on the interpretation of **2f**.: ΤΗΙ ΓΟΡΓΩ may indeed have once intended a personal name, for which see commentary, *infra*.

Commentary

1 ἀπόστρεφε: cf. *PGM* XVIIIa 1-3: Κύριε Σαβαώθ, ἀπόστρεψον ἀπ' ἐμοῦ [κ]όπον τῆς κεφαλ[ῆς] (where it is otherwise rare in the papyri). For the verb on amulets, see *GMA* I. 11.3f.: ἀπόστρεψον ἐκ / τοῦτου τοῦ χωρίου πᾶσαν χάλαζαν καὶ πᾶσαν νιφάδα{ν}, κτλ. (2nd cent. CE bronze hailstone amulets, A and B, from southern France); *idem* 41.24-16: ἀπόστρεψον πᾶν / κακὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ οἰ̈κου το/ύτου (IV^{p}/V^{p} gold *lamella* from Phthiotis); *idem* 53.9: ἀπόστρεψον τὴ/ν ἐπιφερομένην ὀ/φθαλμίαν (gold *lamella* from Tyre, cited above); cf. *idem*, 36.15; C. Bonner, "A Miscellany of Engraved Stones," *Hesperia* 23 (1954) 138-157 (pls. 34-36), no. 36: ἀποστρέψατε πᾶσαν τάσιν, πᾶσαν ἀπεψίαν, πᾶν πόνον στομάχου ἀπὸ Ἰουλιανοῦ ὃν ἔτεκεν Νόννα. The use of the present imperative is uncommon and would, conventionally, indicate the act of continuous, sustained, or repeated warding off. This shows that the bearer suffered from a chronic, as opposed to an acute, medical condition. Migraine is likely.

Ἰησοῦ: except for the derisive address by demons in Mark 1:24; 5:7, this supplicatory use of Jesus' name for healing is found in the Gospels only in Mark 10:47 (par.): Υἱὲ Δαυὶδ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλέησόν με (the Jericho beggar); cf. Luke 17:13: Ἰησοῦ ἐπιστάτα, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς (cf. Luke 23:42). But these verses are not the immediate source of the gold *lamella*'s vocative; already in the Gospels this formula reflects a liturgical tendency.

2-3 τὴγ / Γοργῶπα **[**η..**]** : The traces seem to show ΤΗΙ/ΓΟΡΓΩΠΠΑΗ̣, with the tail of the *alpha* apparently drawn with a long stroke through the last letter (an *êta*?), as if in erasure. There are no letters visible following the final Η̣, although there is room for several

more. Assuming the text is not an erasure, it might be possible to suggest τὴν / Γοργώ, πάν̣τα̣, κτλ., the sense being that the general menace of the Gorgo is to be averted along with the maidservant's more personal threat of the headeache: "Turn aside the Gorgo altogether, and for your maidservant, the headache" (see below). A tiny, final *alpha* seems visible, but this is difficult to read as a letter. The form πάντα is adverbial (see LSJ s.v. πᾶς D.II.4, for πάντως, BAGD, s.v. 2aδ); cf. πάντῃ ("on every side"; "altogether").

It is also difficult to discern enough of a trace after the final vertical of THỊ to form THṆ (τὴν̣ γοργωπα **[.]**), even under magnification, but τήν seems to be what was intended (a *iota*-adscript, τῆι is unlikely here). Still, we have to admit the possibility that τῆι Γοργώπα̣ might have preserved a feminine name to which the following καὶ τῇ παιδίσκῃ σου was appended in direct apposition: "Turn aside, O Jesus, for Gorgopa (who is) also your maidservant, (her) headache." A masculine name, Γοργώπας (gen. Γοργώπα) does exist (as in the famous Spartan general, Gorgopas), but this is not an option here, since the subsequent moniker in line **4f**. below, τῇ παιδίσκῃ, also identifies the bearer as feminine. Even given the reading THI, it would still be difficult to read in lines **2f**. a dative name (τῆι Γοργώπα̣), for here we would have to admit the adscript but nowhere else. Furthermore, on stylistic grounds the use of a καί at the beginning of line **4** seems to separate the two phrases of lines **2f.** and **4f.**, as if independent elements. To read here a sentence such as "turn aside for Gorgopa (?) *and* for your maidservant the headache" would appear to introduce two, not one, bearer. This is only possible if we assume that the writer has reproduced a faulty model, a possibility suggested by other factors. Syntactically, the idiosyncratic nature of the text, with the affliction (τὴν κεφαλαργίαν) in the accusative preceded by the reference to the client in the dative (τῇ παιδίσκῃ) all but ensures that τὴν̣ Γοργῶπα will also decribe an afflicting demon complementary to τὴν κεφαλαργίαν. Standardized texts of a later period would have written ἀπόστρεψον τὴν κεφαλαργίαν ἀπὸ τῆς παιδίσκης σου, (τὴν δεῖνα).

Γοργῶπα, then, must refer to a menacing demon to be averted in Jesus' name; she is evidently a mythological figure representative of the Headache identified directly with the cause of the "maidservant's" complaint. The closest headache-analogy comes in the famous "Antaura" amulet, a spell against the migraine demoness, Antaura, written on a silver *lamella* from Carnuntum (see Kotansky, *GMA* I.13, pp. 58-71, with numerous late Christian adaptations). Given the fact that we have a relatively expensive

gold amulet engraved by a professional scribe, it seems likely that the headache complaints of our sufferer were abnormally severe, and hence were probably migraine or similar 'cluster' headaches.

A severed Medusa or Gorgon head, would be an appropriate folkloric representation of the headache itself, which would have been "sympathetically" understood as an independent entity to be warded off; it is a demonic figure that comes from without, approaching the sufferer just as the Antaura demon does when she arises out of the sea groaning like a hind or a cow.

The usual spelling of the female mythological figure (often in poetry) is either ἡ Γοργώ (gen. Γοργοῦς), or ἡ Γοργών (gen. Γοργόνος, acc. Γοργόνα; along with the plural forms, Γοργόνες, acc. Γοργόνας, etc.). A feminine and masculine form, ὁ / ἡ γοργώψ (gen. γοργῶπος, acc. γοργῶπα), which seems to be what we have here, is defined in LSJ s.v. as "grim-eyed"; "fierce-eyed." It occurs only twice, both times in Euripides. In the first passage, it is an adjective actually describing Pallas Athena's Gorgoneion shield that, when held overhead (γοργῶφ' ὑπερτείνουσά σου κάρᾳ κύκλον, *Electra* 1257), serves as a kind of protective device warding off the "terrible dog-faced goddesses, the Kēres" (δειναὶ δὲ Κῆρές σ' αἱ κυνώπιδες θεαί, *Electra* 1251) . In the second instance, it is used as a plural noun to describe the Erinyes themselves, "dog-faced dreaded goddessess" (ὦ Φοιβ', ἀποκτενοῦσί μ' αἱ κυνώπιδες / γοργῶπες ἐνέρων ἱερίαι, δειναὶ θεαί, *Orestes* 260-1).

In the magical papyri, a "Gorgonian head" (τὸ γοργόνειον κάρα) is to be depicted on an engraved iron fetter (*PGM* IV. 3137f.), and in *PGM* IV.1404 a netherworld three-headed goddess is addressed as the "dreaded, grim-faced (γοργῶπι) Persephone-Kore." The unpublished index to Preisendanz also refers to the demon Γοργοπιός in A. Delatte's, *Anecdota Atheniensia*, I: *Textes grecs inédits relatifs à l'histoire des religions* (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 36, Liège, H. Vaillant-Carmanne / Paris: E. Champion, 1927), p. 438, 22.

An engraved sardonyx first published in 1836 and discussed by Campbell Bonner (*Studies in Magical Amulets, Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1950]), 43, 76 is the only apparent certain case of the mythological association of Perseus with the Gorgon. The gemstone depicts Perseus, armed with a *harpê* and carrying the severed Medusa head, with the inscription φεῦγε, πόδαγρα, Περσεύς σε διώκει ("Flee, Gout, Perseus is chasing you"). Although here the analogy differs in that the disease is gout, not headache, and Perseus seems to be using the Gorgon apotropaically against the gout, it demonstrates a near contempo-

rary use of the Perseid myth of the Gorgon in a magical context. Perseus, too, probably lies behind the use of the 'wing-formation' epithet, Γοργωφωνας (leg. Γοργοφόνας, "Gorgo-Slayer") in *PGM* XVIIIb, whose diminishing form was presumably meant to ally the fever named on the amulet. On our *lamella*, Ἰησοῦς may well have supplanted the mythological figure of Περσεύς, as slayer of the Gorgon, *par excellence*; on the Perseus myth in general, see Timothy Gantz, *Early Greek Myth. A Guide to the Literary and Artistic Sources* (Baltimore / London: Johns Hopkins, 1993), 304-307.

4-5 τῇ παιδίσ/κῃ σου: The use of "maidservant" (viz., of Jesus—'σου') here seems akin to the early Pauline use of δοῦλος / δούλη to designate a "slave" of the Lord (cf. the precedence for this use in Joel 3:2, cited in Acts 2:18); however, in the New Testament παιδίσκη is a common Hellenistic diminuitive for a female slaves (ἡ παῖς) and never specifies Christian "servants" in a metaphorical sense. It would not therefore have served as a model for the usage on this amulet. The High Priest's παιδίσκη in the story of Peter's denial is a virtual Herodian slave (Mark 14:69 par.—in John 18:17 she is a doorkeeper-maiden, ἡ παιδίσκη ἡ θυρωρός), as is the doorkeeper Rhoda in the house of Mary, mother of John-Mark (Acts 12:13). The slave-girl who possessed a kind of divinatory spirit (παιδίσκην τινὰ ἔχουσαν πνεῦμα πύθωνα) in the remarkable episode outside of Philippi (Acts 16:16) has masters (οἱ κυρίοι) who are Roman (Acts 16:21). In Gal 4:22-30, παιδίσκη (drawn from LXX Gen. 21:10 אָמָה) designates Hagar from whom Abraham has fathered Ishmael. And although both Philo and Josephus use the term (the former especially in connection with the Hagar story), there is no indication that "slave woman" had ever come to designate a Jewish (or Christian) "servant" of God. The relatively early *Epistle of Barnabas* 19.7 c.1. (= *Didache* 4.10) also refers to παιδίσκη and δοῦλος as literal slaves. Therefore, on the basis of this evidence, we can only conclude that the term "your female servant" must reflect an independent but invaluable witness to an early designation for female converts to Christianity in the environs of Syria or Asia Minor. In this case, we possess a valuable, autonomous record of an early Christian counterpart to the Pauline use of δούλη (viz. δοῦλος).

5-7 τὴν / κεφαλαρλ/γίαν: see *GMA* I. 57.17 (commentary, p. 329); *Suppl. Mag.* 14.5 (with commentary in Daniel & Maltomini I, p. 41); 72.ii.26 (with commentary in Daniel & Maltomini II, p. 126). The conflated reading of two spellings ρ/λ may originate in a ms. variant falsely inserted into the text; cf. *GMA* I, p. 225 (on οἰῦκος).

7-9 εἰς δό/ξαν ὀνόμα/τός σου: One would rather have expected εἰς <τὴν> δό/ξαν <τοῦ> ὀνόμα/τός σου. The expression, in view of the divine names that follow, reflects a simple Christian or early 'Jewish-Christian' piety. The σου immediately preceding the triadic names ("... to the glory of your name, *Iaō Adōnai Sabaōth*") would appear to stand in opposition to the σου in reference to Jesus in the phrase "your slave-woman" of **4f**. But it is entirely possible that the σου also refers to the Ἰησοῦ of line **2**. In this case, however, Ἰάω Ἀδωναὶ Σαβαώθ would have to be preceded by a period and show no syntactical relationship with the rest of the text ("... to the glory of your name. *Iaō Adōnai Sabaōth*," etc.). Here the divine names, as well as the angel-names, would represent a loose appendage of invoked powers. For εἰς δόξαν in reference to God (but not the Name), cf. Rom 15:7; 1 Cor 10:31; 2 Cor 4:15; Phil 1:11; 2:11.

9-10 Ἰάω Ἀ/δωναὶ Σαβα/ώθ: Resting above the initial Δ there seems to be a distinct remnant of Π from the previous text, not completely erased. At the end of the line, following a series of strokes—representing either *iota*'s or vertical bars—appears an elaborate scribbly mark, terminating in a series of looping waves to the upper right of the line. This is intended to represent ligatures of some kind, highly cursive writing, or additional erasures, as mentioned. The writing of this very common divine triad as Ἰάω Ἀδωναὶ Σαβαώθ (instead of Ἰάω Σαβαώθ Ἀδωναὶ) may have arisen from an interlinear correction that had Ἀδωναί subsequently copied back into the text in front of Σαβαώθ rather than after it.

12-14 The erased and dittographic text is doubtful here. No letters of **12** and **14** can be read with certainty. Furthermore, the Οὐριήλ of **13** looks like the impossible name Ϙυριήλ, but this may be due to an underlying erasure or a crease in the foil. On the popular etymology of Ouriel and Gabriel, see R. Kotansky, "Two Inscribed Jewish Aramaic Amulets from Syria," *IEJ* 41 (1991), 267-281, esp. 276, 278, with numerous parallels. As mentioned earlier, one expects three angels here, or even four (viz. Μιχαήλ, Γαβριήλ, Ῥαφαήλ, Οὐριήλ).

Although the text is ostensibly Christian, several features require special attention. Particularly noteworthy is the lack of any liturgical or credal language typical of later Christian magic. The Christian aspect is restricted to the simple use of Jesus' name in the vocative (Ἰησοῦ). There is no formulaic use of "in the name of ..." (e.g., in *Suppl.Mag.* I. 20; cf. II. 61, etc.), nor other trinitarian formulas typical of later Christian papyrus spells or *lamellae*, as in the late Christian gold *lamella*

for ophthalmia: ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ θ(εο)ῦ καὶ Ἰη(σο)ῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ, καὶ πν(εύματο)ς ἁγίου (*GMA* I. 53.1-3, from Syria, undated; cf. *GMA* I. 35.10; 52.119; *Suppl. Mag.* I. 36.1, etc.). There are no abbreviated *nomina sacra* (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.20; I.25; I.28; I.35; *GMA* I. 35); no *alpha-omega*'s and staurograms (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.22; I.25; I.26; I.27; I.29; I.34; I.35; II.59; II.60; II.62); no 'Amens' (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.2 3; I.27; I.34); no 'One-God'-formulas (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.21; I.33; *GMA* I. 52.119); no trisagions (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.25; I.32); no scriptural citations (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.26; I.29—usually Ps. 90 and texts from Matthew); and no credos or liturgy (cf. *Suppl. Mag.* I.23; I.29; I.30). No elements reflective of later post-Constantinian Christian magic characterize this text at all (see *Suppl. Mag.* I, nos. 20-36 ["Applied Magic: Protective Charms, Christian"]—all dating to the late 4th 6th centuries CE; *PGM* nos. P 1-24, 4th-6th cent. CE, with P 21, ca. 300 CE; Meyer & Smith, edd. *Ancient Christian Magic*, esp. 27-57). The gold *lamella*'s simple apotropaic prayer to Jesus—along with a handful of divine and angelic names—is conspicuous for its absence of stereotypical language characteristic of late Christian magical texts.

Given the relatively early date of the *lamella*, the text may well derive from a Hellenistic Jewish milieu that has simply appropriated Jesus' name for its magical properties (cf. Acts 19:13; *PGM* IV. 3019, on which see R. Kotansky, "Greek Exorcistic Amulets," in Marvin Meyer & Paul Mirecki, edd. *Ancient Magic & Ritual Power* [Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 129; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995], 243-277). Or, the wearer may have been an adherent to some form of Jewish-Christianity at a time when Christianity was not yet sharply demarcated from its Jewish roots (cf. Stephen G. Wilson, art. "Jewish Christian Relations 70-170 C.E.," *ABD* 3 [1992], 835-839, with lit.). That our text, however, is surely Christian, is recommended from the use of the pronominal phrase ἡ παιδίσκη σου (**4f.**), which stands in direct affiliation with Ἰησοῦ (**2**). "Your servant" can only refer to Jesus, not to the Jewish God of lines **9-11**, where the same pronoun of ὀνόματός σου seems more easily attached to "Iaō Adōnai Sabaōth" (see commentary *supra*). Is it possible that Jesus is here being equated with the Jewish Lord God of Hosts? Cf. *PGM* IV. 3019f.: ὁρκίζω σε κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν Ἑβραίων, Ἰησοῦ, κτλ., an adjuration spoken in tandem with a protective amulet on a tin leaf. Independently, an original Hellenistic Jewish milieu is supported further in part by the apparent absence of vowel-series, χαρακτῆρες, named Egyptian deities, and other voces magicae—elements that are regularly found in the 'syncretistic' pantheons of the 'Graeco-Egyptian' magical tradition and regularly appear in the later Christian spells cited above. Such foreign elements, on the other hand, might be excluded from more

'orthodox' traditions of Jewish magic—esoteric traditions that would, however, permit the invocation of angelic names such as those that finalize our inscription. The absence of other features typical of magical vernacular in general may be due to the early date of the gold-leaf, as well. As suggested in *GMA* (p. xix), early magical texts (1st cent. BCE.-2nd cent. CE) show a unmistakable absence of standardized formulas. The following expressions are typical of amuletic texts of the late third/early fourth centuries and later: the ἕτεκεν-formula; the temporal ἤδη ἤδη, ταχὺ ταχύ (*Suppl. Mag.* I 23.17; I 35.14, etc.); fixed aorist imperatives (θεράπευσον, for example, is typically Christian: *Supp.Mag.* I. 20.3, 7; 21.8f.; 28.4; 34. 1f., 4f.; cf. furthermore, διαφύλαξον, etc.); adjurative and conjurative language (ἐπικαλοῦμαι σε / ἐξορκίζω σε, etc); specific reference to the bearer of the phylactery (*Suppl. Mag.* I 23.15f.; I 30.4f.; I. 34.9f.; φυλακτήριον is a favorite Christian term), and so on. These, taken with the absence of the magical "characters," vowels, and the like, mentioned above, support an early date when magical texts had not been 'commercialized' to the extent that formulaic language replaced a more independent, *ad hoc*, creative style of amulet composition.

A SEVENTH-CENTURY COPTIC LIMESTONE IN THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD

(BODL. COPT. INSCR. 426)

Paul Mirecki
University of Kansas

1. *Introduction to the Limestone Manuscript and its Texts:*

1.a. *Previous research and discovery*

This large Coptic limestone and some of its texts were briefly described in 1922 by W. E. Crum in a centenary volume honoring Jean-François Champollion.[1] The texts and photos are published here for the first time in a volume honoring our late colleague and friend William M. Brashear.[2] Crum notes that the stone, written on both sides and in the Sahidic dialect, was acquired in Thebes by the noted epigrapher Norman de Garis Davies and deposited in the Bodleian Museum, Oxford.[3]

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[1] W. E. Crum, "La Magie Copte. Nouveaux Textes" in *Recueil D'Études Égyptologiques* (Paris: Librarie Ancienne [H. & E. Champion], 1922) 537-544, the stone is only briefly discussed on p. 544 with no transcription or photo; Crum translates a few lines (B.10-15a) into French. His article is only briefly discussed by Kropp, who did not see the limestone (which would have been in the Bodleian at that time), but translates Crum's French translation (of B.10-15a) into German, in A. M. Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 3 vols. (Brussels: Foundation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1930-31) 3.210-11 (= §360). I am indebted to Dr. Helen Whitehouse of the Ashmolean Museum for allowing me access to the Ashmolean's Bodleian collection in August 1993, for quality photographs and for her kind permission to publish the artifact; the stone, actually part of the Bodleian collection, has been stored in the Ashmolean Museum since 1939.

[2] The present writer was fortunate to work under William Brashear in the Papyrussammlung of the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin for four long summers in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The many months of discussion of problematic Greek and Coptic texts, and the endless hours we spent analyzing and conserving numerous damaged papyri, made clear to me that Bill's reputation for scholarly excellence was combined with a generous willingness to share the vast treasures of the Berlin papyrus collection under his expert care.

[3] Davies, a one time Congregational clergyman and a most promising dilettante Egyptologist under F. Ll. Griffith, quickly became a master epigrapher as his high quality work throughout Egypt demonstrates. His work in Thebes, El-Amarna, and Saqqara between 1898 and 1937 was done under the auspices of the Egypt Exploration Fund and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, the time and location of this find were not noted in the museum's files which were made available for my study in August of 1993. On Norman de Garis Davies and his wife Nina Davies (an

1.b. *Description of the manuscript*

The limestone is unusually large (24.2 x 24.2 cm)[4], and in the shape of an irregular hexagon of varying thickness (0.1-3.0 cm; see photos). The top edge (1.0-2.0 cm thick) is flat from tooling with traces of uncolored plaster or mortar indicating the stone had been previously used for some other purpose. The other edges are sharp, jagged and brittle, having suffered damage after inscribing, resulting in several lacunae[5].

Another unusual feature of the stone, crucial to an understanding of its function, is that it cannot stand upright by itself, as it is "top heavy" with a pointed and irregular bottom edge. The fact that the inscribed areas conform to the present shape of the stone indicates that the stone was essentially in its present shape when it was inscribed, despite some later minor damage. There is a small hole (ca. 3.5 mm diameter) which had been drilled through the stone near its bottom edge. The hole appears to have been drilled before the stone was inscribed, as the inscribed area on both sides is written around the hole, but one cannot be certain that the hole was or was not related to a previous function of the stone. Crum suggests that a cord was passed through the hole and the stone was "sans doute" suspended or mounted on a wall, or suspended from a piece of furniture.[6] The basic problem with Crum's suggestion is that the inscribed text would be "up-side down" on the suspended stone, and he offers no parallels for such stones suspended from walls or furniture,

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epigrapher and artist in her own right), see *Excavating in Egypt: The Egypt Exploration Society 1882-1982*. T. G. H. James, ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1982) 67-70, 89-99, 107, 148-159; see also W. R. Dawson and E. P. Uphill, *Who Was Who in Egyptology* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, n.d.) 2nd rev. ed., 77-78.

[4] Crum gives the following dimensions: 24 x 26 cm. I cannot account for the differences in our measurements, except to say that my measurements in the summer of 1993 were made with these differences in mind. I find the greatest height to be 24.2 cm, and the greatest breadth to be (coincidentally) 24.2 cm. I suppose that Crum's measurements were meant to be approximates, and this is further suggested by the cursory, though insightful nature of his discussion.

[5] The greatest damage is to the right side of side A (= left side of side B), giving one the impression that the stone was dropped onto this edge after it was inscribed, causing the lacunae especially evident on side B. This raises at least the possibility of deliberate damage due to a context of persecution.

[6] "En effet, un trou qui la transperce, du côté où son épaisseur est la moindre, a servi sans doute à la faire suspendre, au moyen d'une corde, soit à un mur, soit à quelque meuble; ce qui nous permet de reconnaître le mode d'emploi de cette sorte de phylactères. Je ne me souviens pas d'avoir rencontré ailleurs un ostracon percé de cette façon," Crum "La Magie Copte," p. 544.

whether in private or monastic contexts.[7] If we are correct in interpreting the function of this stone in relation to Christian magic and ritual power,[8] we note that there is a long tradition of "suspension" (hanging) and "suspension up-side down" in ancient ritual practice.[9] The stone is too heavy to have been comfortably worn around a person's neck as an amulet, although this use is not impossible, especially if it involved an unusual monastic ritual practice such as punishment related to repentance,[10] and in which case the text would be correctly "right-side up" to the eyes of the wearer; but this interpretation seems unlikely.

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[7] The closest parallel would be the inscribed Greek and Coptic wooden plaques which were suspended on walls, some containing writing exercises for educational purposes and others containing sacred texts for inspirational purposes. See, for just a few examples, R. Cribiore, "A School Tablet: A List of Names and Numbers," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 35 (1998) 145-51 with bibliography; and C. Préaux, "Une amulette chrétienne aux Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Historie de Bruxelles, "*Chronique d'Égypte* 19 (1935) 361-70, and R. G. Warga, "A Christian Amulet on Wood," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 25 (1988) 149-52. In these two examples described by their editors as amulets, the rationale for the use of the term appears to be that the tablets were understood to have had an apotropaic function due to their use of sacred texts.

[8] On the concept of "magic and ritual power," see the discussions in Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, "Introduction," in *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1994 [reprinted by Princeton University Press, 1999]) 1-6; and Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, "Introduction," in Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (RGRW 129; Leiden: Brill, 1995) 3-5.

[9] There are some examples in the Greek magical papyri, see *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, ed. K. Preisendanz; zweite, verbesserte Auflage von A. Henrichs, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973-74) (hence, *PGM*) II. 45-50; XXXVI.236-40 and CXXIV.10-40; cf. H. D. Betz, *The Greek Magical papyri in Translation including the Demotic Spells*, ed. H. D. Betz (University of Chicago, 1986) 13-14, 275 and 321. It is noteworthy that all such suspended and/or inverted objects are valued negatively in these rituals, an issue that is difficult to reconcile with our limestone inscribed with sacred texts. Enemies and the damned are often represented in an "up-side down" position In pre-Coptic Egyptian texts and art (cf. R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* [*SAOC* 54; Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1993] 168-71). The apostle Peter, mentioned in the limestone's text (side B, line 1), is said in some early Christian traditions to have been crucified up-side down, cf. *Acts of Peter* 37(8) - 38(9), in Wilhelm Schneemelcher & R. McL. Wilson, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*: Volume Two: *Writings Related to the Apostles, Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992) 315, and in Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History* vol. I with an English translation by Kirsopp Lake (LCL #153; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926/1998) 191 (= book 3.1.2-3). It seems unlikely, at least to the present writer, that this large limestone was suspended up-side down, and that it was, instead, meant for some sort of public or private display within a ritual context.

[10] Cf. Mark 9:42; Matt 18:6; Luke 17:1-2.

Another suggestion is that the stone's uninscribed bottom portion originally extended downward to a point, but has broken off, so that the pointed bottom portion of the stone was buried in the ground and a metal rod or wooden dowel, or some other device, was passed through the hole in order to stabilize the "top heavy" stone and thus to keep it erect.[11] In such a case, the stone would have had the function of some sort of crude boundary stone inscribed on both sides, perhaps with an apotropaic function to ward off evil influences; if this is the case, it is not a simple ostracon, but rather a crude limestone stele, however small. Other suggestions are that the stone is possibly a "stone deposit amulet" set into the foundation of a Christian building,[12] a display copy of texts for writing practice, a scribe's exemplar text for copying,[13] or a display copy for inspirational or other ritual use in a monk's cell or a chapel.[14] Whatever the stone's function might have been, parallels to its texts indicate that we are here in the world of ancient Christian ritual power, specifically focussing on the power of the word with, perhaps, a historiolic function generally related to the gospels, Jesus and the twelve apostles.[15] Crum describes the stone as a sort of "phylactery," apparently basing his judgment on the texts, rather than on the unusual form of the stone.[16]

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[11] Suggestion by William Brashear in a personal conversation at the Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin, in August 1993.

[12] Suggestion by Helen Whitehouse in a personal conversation at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in August 1993.

[13] Although a much earlier example (from the 19th-Dynasty), see the large limestone covered in hieroglyphs, most probably a scribe's exemplar copy of the famous *Story of Sinuhe* in J. W. B. Barns, *The Ashmolean Ostracon of Sinuhe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), coincidentally in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

[14] Similar texts, such as gospel and psalm incipits and name lists, were written in Greek on the inner walls of a grotto chapel in the Thebaid, in which they were probably used for both inspiration and apotropaic protection; on the dating of the texts and paintings, the editor Lefebvre notes, "Cette chapelle est évidemment postérieure à la Paix de l'Église. Elle est probablement ... contemporaine des premières persécutions arabes"; see Gustave Lefebvre, "Égypte Chrétienne III: A. Grotte de la Basse Thébaïde. B. Inscriptiones Coptes. C. Inscriptions Grecques," *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*, tome X (le Caire: l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1910 [1909]) 1-12.

[15] On the theory and practice of the *historiola*, see David Frankfurter, "Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *Historiola* in Ritual Spells," in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power,* 457-76.

[16] Crum states, "La croyance aux vertus magiques de ces versets est connue," in Crum "La Magie Copte," p. 544 n 1.

1.c. *Dating the scribe's handwriting style*

Crum dates the scribe's hand to about the seventh-century, and the present author defers to Crum's expert judgement on this matter.[17] However, a comparison of the scribe's hand with hands on other Coptic manuscripts indicates similar hands can be precisely dated to 903 and 1006, three to four hundred years after Crum's date.[18] Apart from many similar letter shapes, both of these hands share with the hand of the Bodleian limestone the apparent use of a blunt pen resulting in a consistent width of ink throughout each letter, a minimal amount of flourish within the letters themselves, and a general and consistent slant of all letters to the upper right.

1.d. *Language*

As noted, the text is written in the Sahidic dialect of Coptic. The most notable features are the variant spellings involving both vowels and consonants, as discussed below (see textual commentary for A.03; B.02, 04-05, 07-08). These variant spellings do not indicate any consistent morphological variations departing from what can be expected in such Sahidic documents. The simple graphemic/phonemic variations here are not significant for any meaningful discussion of outside dialectal influence.[19] Except for the case of ⲍⲱⲙⲉ (see textual commentary for A.01), the unusual spellings here are only found in Greek words (or, Semitic names which entered Coptic in their Greek forms).

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[17] Throughout this study, the words author, scribe and ritualist are used interchangeably, unless noted in the discussions.

[18] The following identifications and citations are from Maria Cramer, *Koptische Paläographie* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1964). Notable hands are in the following manuscripts: (1) Tafel 56, Nr. 25: "Pierpont Morgan Bibliothek MS 603, fol 2r ... Anno 903," and (2) Tafel 63, Nr. 32: "British Museum MS Or. 1320, fol 51r ... Anno 1006."

[19] Note the concise summary comment by Wolf-Peter Funk, "The Coptic dialects comprise not just different pronunciations and spellings ... but, in fact different normative systems of written communication reflecting ... some of the locally, regionally, or even sometimes nationally balanced spoken idioms" in W.-P. Funk, "Dialects, Morphology of Coptic" in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. Aziz S. Atiya (New York: Macmillan,1991) 8:101-108. One gets the impression from both Crum and Kahle (whom I reference when discussing the variants in the limestone), and even from recent Coptic editions, that every graphemic/phonemic variant is due to an outside dialectal influence. Although this may be true in individual cases (e.g., common shifts of ⲣ to ⲗ in Fayyumic; ⲉ to ⲁ in Subakhmimic), many simple graphemic/phonemic variants are due to localized or individualized idiosyncracies or preferences in pronunciation or writing which are attested across dialectal boundaries, rather than to differences between broader morphological structures defining those dialects.

Apart from εὐαγγέλιον, the variants all occur in names of persons (Ἰάκωβος, Βαρθολομαῖος) or a political group (ζηλωτής). The variants are either widely attested elsewhere, or can be expected due to established shifts among vowels and among consonants, but they cannot be credited to dialectal influence, and may instead indicate the idiolect of an insufficiently trained scribe who does not adhere to one established orthography.[20]

The scribe also deviates from Horner's eclectic text by once writing the initial epsilon of a prefix (relative form of the first perfect, 3rd person plural) as a supralinear stroke (ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϭⲧⲱⲧ [cf. Horner: ⲉⲛⲧⲁϭⲧⲱⲧ]).[21]

When the scribe writes the supralinear stroke over some consonants and the two-dot trema over iota, they are sometimes extremely thin and barely visible, suggesting that their occasional absence over letters may be due to abrasion or fading from the stone's smooth surface, rather than scribal omission, although the latter cannot be ruled out. In the transcription which follows, the stroke and the trema are not supplied where they are not visible.

1.e. *Punctuation*

Concerning punctuation, the scribe employs a full colon (: [cf. A. 01, 03-06, 09-10, 13-16; B.04-08, 11, 13, 15]) and a raised dot (· [cf. A.07, 18]), although the latter, in both cases, is quite likely the upper remains of a partly abraded full colon. The scribe once writes a dash (—) at the end of a line (B.09) to indicate the end of a text unit, and further emphasizes this by drawing a broken horizontal line, functioning as a text separator, across the entire surface of the stone (between lines B.09-10). In the transcription which follows, punctuation is not supplied where it is not visible.

1.f. *The texts and their history-of-religions context*

The collection of texts found on the stone are usually employed in Coptic and Greek Christian manuscripts used in contexts of magic and ritual power. Specifically, the texts have been found in sourcebooks from which amulets were written and on such amulets

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[20] See discussions in the textual commentary for A.03 and B.01-09 §§b.i-iii; cf. R. Kasser, "Idiolect" in *Coptic Encyclopedia* 8:143-45.

[21] Horner's critical apparatus obscurely indicates more than one manuscript has this reading "ⲉⲛ(ⲛ̄ 50 &c)ⲧⲁϭⲧⲱⲧ".

themselves. Assuming we are correct that this stone finds its primary function in Christian ritual, the basic issue regarding the interpretation of the stone is, of course, whether it is a sort of sourcetext for the writing of amulets, or is an amulet itself. I know of no boundary or foundation stones with these texts, and the texts nearly always appear on the media of papyrus, vellum, or early paper.[22] Due to the unusual nature of this artifact, I find it nearly impossible to determine whether the stone functions as a sourcebook (display copy) or an amulet.[23] The suggestion that the stone has a ritual function is strengthened by the observation that Christian crosses were written by the scribe on the last line of each side, a standard feature of so-called magical texts. The unusual shape of the stone and the drilled hole near its lower edge suggest to me that the scribe must have had a specific function for the stone itself *as a stone*, leading me to suggest that this artifact was used in a context in which a less durable material would not have been appropriate for the needs of the scribe. For example, the stone might have been deliberately exposed to the weather, which would have deteriorated a more fragile material. Beyond this theoretical reconstruction of the stone's original social context, I do not think it is possible more precisely to determine its original function with any degree of certainty.[24]

The following list is a short guide to the texts included:

Side A:

Incipits of the four gospels in canonical order.
Titles of the four gospels in canonical order.
Short creedal statement concerning Mary and Jesus.
Short creedal statement concerning Jesus.
Three tau-rho crosses.

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[22] The inscribed Thebaid grotto walls are the exception, see n 14.

[23] There are only two amulets, not sourcebooks or fragments thereof, which contain only gospel incipits, and both are Coptic; see P. Mich. 1559, a vellum strip with the incipits of the gospels in canonical order, in Gerald Browne, *Michigan Coptic Texts* (Barcelona: Papyrologica Castroctaviana, 1979) 43-45 (#12; no photo); and P. Berol. 22235, a papyrus strip with the incipits of the gospels also in canonical order (with Matthew's incipit written again after John's incipit), found in two pieces and conserved by the present writer in Berlin's Ägyptisches Museum (forthcoming).

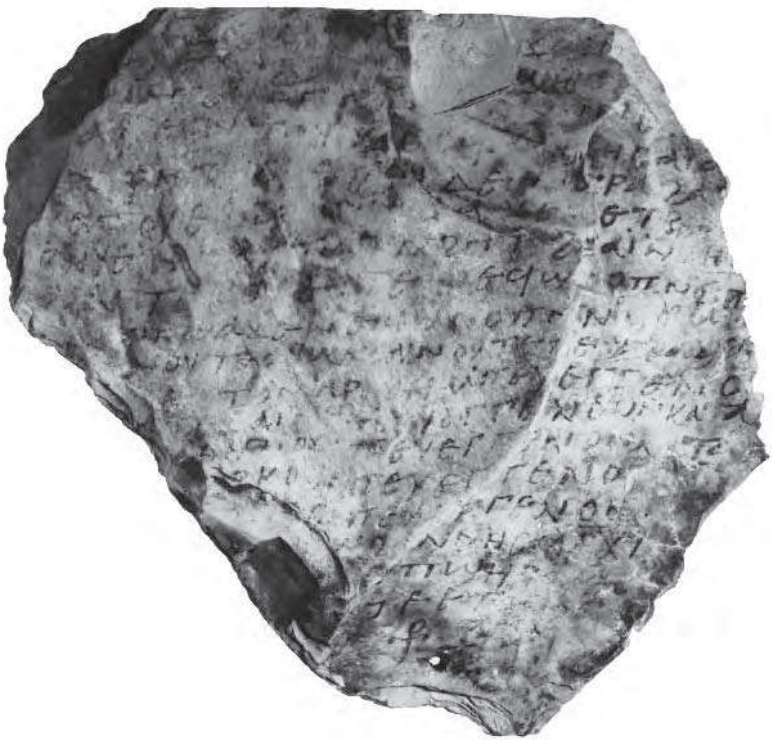
[24] On the problem of determining the precise social context for any ancient artifact, especially a manuscript, whether or not found *in situ*, see the methodological guidelines and discussions in E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980) 74-96; M. Finley, *Ancient History: Evidence and Models* (New York, Viking/Penguin, 1986) 35-36; J. Z. Smith, "The Temple and the Magician," in *Map is not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1978) 172-89; and in the recent popular discussions in N. Morley, *Writing Ancient History* (Cornell University Press, 1999) 53-95, 168-70.

Side B:

List of the twelve apostles substituting Maththias for Judas Iscariot (Luke 6:14-16 and Acts 1:24).
An expanded liturgical invocation (LXX/Exo 3:6).
Concluding "Amen".
Two (three?) tau-rho crosses.

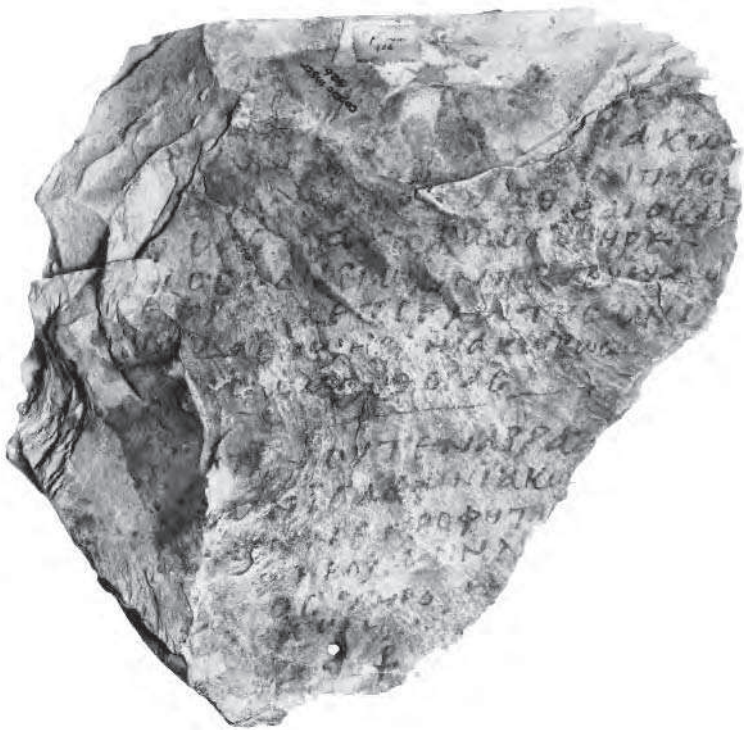
2. *Transcription, Translation and Textual Commentary:*

In the Coptic transcription which follows, letters in square brackets refer to letters which are lost from the manuscript but which have



Side A

been supplied. Square brackets without supplied letters refer to lacunae, or portions of stone which may (or may not) have been originally inscribed, but which are now lost due to chipping of the stone's surface. Sublinear dots outside of brackets refer to letters which are not fully visible except for a trace of ink or a portion of a letter. A sublinear dot within square brackets represents the measurement of one average letter's width as written by this hand. The parenthesized word (vacat) refers to an originally uninscribed portion of the stone's surface, the recognition of which may be significant for a proper reading of a text.



Side B

Side A. 19 lines.

01]ⲛⲁⲱⲙⲉ ⲙ[ⲛⲉ]ⲁⲗⲟ: ⲛ̄[ⲓⲥ ⲡⲉⲭⲥ

02 ⲡⲙⲏ]ⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲁⲁⲃⲉ[ⲗ ⲡ]ⲙⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲁⲃⲣⲁϩⲁⲙ

03 ⲧⲁⲣⲭ]ⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲃⲉⲗⲗⲉ[ⲗⲓ]ⲟⲛ: ⲛ̄ⲓⲥ [ⲡⲉⲭⲥ

04 ⲍⲉⲕ]ⲁⲥⲉ: ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥⲍⲟⲟϥ ⲛ̄ⲑⲓ̈ ⲏⲥⲁⲓ̈ⲁ[ⲥ

05 ⲡⲡⲣⲟ]ⲫⲏⲧⲏⲥ: ⲉⲡⲉⲓⲇⲉⲛⲡⲉⲣ ⲁϩⲁϩ

06 ϩⲓⲧ]ⲟⲟⲧⲟⲩ ⲉⲥϩⲁ[ⲓ̈] ⲛⲛ̄ⲙⲁⲍⲉ: ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲛ[ⲉ

07 ϩ]ⲃⲏⲃⲉ· ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲃⲧⲱⲧ ⲛ̄ϩⲏⲧ ϩⲣⲁⲓ̈ ⲛ̄ϩⲏ[ⲧⲛ̄

08 ϩⲛ̄ ⲧⲉϩⲟⲃⲉⲓⲧⲉ ⲛⲉϥⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲟⲓ ⲡ[ⲙⲁⲍⲉ

09 ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲙⲁⲍⲉ ⲛⲉϥⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲁϩⲣⲙ̄:

10 ⲡ]ⲛⲟⲃⲧⲉ ⲁⲃⲱ ⲛⲉⲃⲛⲟⲃⲧⲉ ⲛⲉ ⲡⲙⲁⲍⲉ:

11 ⲡ]ⲉ[ϥ]ⲧⲟ ⲛⲁⲣⲭⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲃⲉⲗⲗⲉⲗⲓⲟ[ⲛ

12 ⲉ]ⲧⲟ[ⲃ]ⲁⲁ[ⲃ] ⲡⲉⲃⲉⲗⲗⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲕⲁⲧⲁ

13 ⲙ]ⲁⲑⲑⲁⲓⲟⲥ: ⲡⲉⲃⲉⲗⲗⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ

14 ⲙⲁ]ϩⲕⲟⲥ: ⲡⲉⲃⲉⲗⲗⲉⲗⲓⲟ[ⲛ ⲕⲁ]ⲧ[ⲁ

15 ⲗⲟⲃⲕⲟ]ⲥ: ⲡⲉⲃ[ⲉ]ⲗⲗⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ [ⲕⲁⲧⲁ

16 ⲓ̈]ⲱϩⲁⲛⲛⲏⲥ: ⲙ̄ⲭⲥ̄[

17]ⲓ̈ⲥ ⲡⲙⲏⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ (vacat) [

18 ⲡⲛⲟⲃ]ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲛ̄ϩ̄· (vacat) [

19] ϧ ϧ ϧ [

Side A. 19 lines.

01 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ

02 the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

03 The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

04 just as Isaiah the prophet

05 spoke. Inasmuch as many

06 have undertaken to write the words concerning the

07 things which were received by us.

08 In the beginning was the Word,

09 and the Word was with

10 God and the Word was God:

11 The four beginnings of the Gospel

12 which is Holy: the Gospel according to

13 Matthew, the Gospel according to

14 Mark, the Gospel according to

15 Luke, the Gospel according to

16 John. Mary Bore Christ!

17 Jesus the Son of

18 God, forever!

19 (Three crosses in the form of tau-rho signs)

Side B. 16 lines.

01 ⲥⲓⲙⲱⲛ ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥ†ⲣⲛ̄ϥ ⲉ]ⲡⲉⲧ[ⲣⲟⲥ

02 ⲙⲛ̄ ⲁ]ⲛ̣ⲁ̣ⲣⲉ[ⲁⲥ ⲡⲉϥⲥⲟⲛ ⲙⲛ̄] ⲓ̈ⲁⲕⲱⲃ̣[ⲱⲥ

03 ⲙⲛ̄ ⲓ̈ⲱⲃ]ⲁ̣ⲛⲛⲏⲥ [ⲙⲛ] ⲫⲓⲗⲓⲡⲡⲟⲩ̣ [ⲙⲛ̄

04 ⲃⲁⲣⲑ]ⲱⲗⲱ̣ⲙⲁ̣ⲓⲟⲩ̣: ⲙⲁⲑⲑⲁⲓⲟⲥ: ⲙⲛ̄[

05 ⲑ]ⲱ̣ⲙⲁⲥ: ⲓ̈ⲁⲕⲱⲃⲱⲥ ⲡⲱⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄[ⲁⲗ

06 ⲫⲁ]ⲓⲟⲥ: ⲙⲛ ⲥⲓⲙⲱⲛ ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲩⲱⲁ̣ⲃ̣ⲱ̣[

07 ⲟⲩⲧ]ⲉ ⲉⲣⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ⲍⲉ ⲡⲥ̣ⲉ̣ⲗⲱⲧⲏⲥ: ⲙⲛ̄ ⲓ̈[

08 ⲟⲩⲁⲁⲥ ⲡⲱⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲓ̈ⲁⲕⲱⲃⲱⲥ:

09 ⲁ̣ⲩⲱ ⲙⲁⲑⲑⲓⲁⲥ -

10 ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲃⲣⲁⲉ[ⲁⲙ

11 ⲙⲛ ⲓ̈ⲥⲁⲕ: ⲙⲛ ⲓ̈ⲁⲕⲱ[ⲃ

12 ⲙⲛ ⲛⲉⲡⲣⲟⲫⲏⲧⲏ[ⲥ

13 (vacat) ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ: ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲛⲁⲓ̣[ⲁ

14 ⲕ]ⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ̣ ⲱ̣ⲁ[

15 ⲉⲛⲉⲉ] ⲉ̣ⲁⲙ[(vacat)]ⲏⲛ: (vacat)

16] ⲉ̣ ⲉ̣ [

Side B. 16 lines.

01 Simon whom he named Peter,

02 and Andrew his brother, and James

03 and John and Philip and

04 Bartholomew: Matthew and

05 Thomas, James the son of

06 Alphaios, and Simon whom they

07 call the Zealot, and

08 Judas the son of James,

09 and Maththias –

10 The God of Abraham

11 and Isaac and Jacob,

12 and all the prophets,

13 and all the

14 righteous, forever.

15 Amen.

16 (Two crosses in the form of tau-rho signs)

Textual Commentary[25]

A.01: ⳁⲡⲍⲱⲙⲉ.
Cf. Horner ⲡⲍⲱⲱⲙⲉ. In the older discussions, Crum notes ⲍⲱⲙⲉ occurs in the Sahidic, Subakhmimic and Fayyumic dialects (Crum, 770b), while Kahle observes that the single omega is "extraordinarily rare in later texts, both literary and non-literary, though in the case of some words the correct spelling is not certain throughout the Coptic period, e.g. ⲡⲍⲱ(ⲱ)ⲙⲉ"(Kahle, 91 [§63C]). Most recently, Loprieno notes "to express a glottal stop following the tonic vowel in plurisyllabic words, all dialects except Bohairic exhibit the reduplication of the other vowel's grapheme," and, in the case of a word like ⲍⲱⲙⲉ, "this phoneme is conveyed in most dialects by the reduplication of the tonic vowel," thus, ⲍⲱⲱⲙⲉ (44-46 [§3.6.1]).[26]

A.03: ⲡⲉϥⲉⲣⲣⲉ[ⲗⲁ]ⲟⲛ.
The vocalic shift to ⲉ from ⲁ appears on this limestone only with this word and consistently in all six of its occurences, suggesting for this technical term a traditional vocalization which the scribe did not abandon. Crum notes the shift is found "in Greek words ... ⲉ for ⲁ rarely" (Crum, 50a [§d]). Kahle suggests dialectal influence from Akhmimic and "in non-literary texts this phenomenon is common only in the Theban area and in a few texts, mostly early, from further north" (Kahle, 58-59 [§7]), although influence from Fayyumic might be possible in this case. The standard spelling (ⲡⲉϥⲁⲣⲣⲉⲗⲁⲟⲛ) follows the Greek spelling.

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[25] In the textual commentary, the following works are referenced using short titles based on the author's name: Crum = W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939); Horner = G. Horner, *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect otherwise called Sahidic or Thebaic*.(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911-24), or Horner, *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Northern Dialect otherwise called Memphitic or Bohairic*.(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898-1905); Kahle = P. E. Kahle, *Bala'izah: Coptic Texts from Deir el-Bala'izah in Upper Egypt*. 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954); Kasser = R. Kasser, *Compléments au dictionnaire copte de Crum* (Le Caire: l'Institut français d' Archéologie orientale, 1964); A. Loprieno, *Ancient Egyptian: A Linguistic Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Nestle-Aland = *The Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed., corrected, K. Aland, M. Black, C. Martini, B. M. Metzger, A. Wikgren, eds. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983); Westendorf = W. Westendorf, *Koptisches Handwörterbuch* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1977).

[26] See also R. Kasser, "Gemination, Vocalic" in *Coptic Encylopedia* 8:131-33.

A.03: ϊc

The *nomen sacrum*[27] does not evidence any trace of the necessary and expected supralinear stroke. It appears that the very thin strokes written by this scribe were occasionally abraded or faded from the stone's smooth surface.[28]

A.03-04: ⲡⲱⲛⲣⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ (Horner).

The limestone's text omits the phrase. However, it does appear later at A.17-18. This phrase is a well-known textual variant originating in Greek manuscripts of Mark (υἱοῦ Θεοῦ). If it did not previously drop out from early Greek manuscripts through a common error of anablepsis and homoioteleuton with the preceding word Χριστοῦ, then it is a later theological addition and its absence from Greek manuscripts may have no small implications for Mark's theology. In any case, the Nestle-Aland critical apparatus indicates the phrase is present in the majority of Greek and Coptic manuscripts (thus, Aland includes it in his eclectic text), but notes it is absent from Origen and a few important Greek manuscripts, such as a*, Θ and (28). Horner's apparatus indicates it is found in most Coptic manuscripts (thus, he includes it in his eclectic text), but his apparatus displays further absence of the phrase from manuscript 255, as well as Ir, Bas, Tit, Serap, Cyr^{j}, and Victorin.

A.04-05: ⲍⲉⲕ]ⲁⲥⲉ: ⲛⲧⲁϥⲍⲟⲟϥ ⲛ̄ⲑⲓ ⲛⲥⲁϊⲁ[ⲥ / ⲡⲉⲡⲣⲟ]ⲫⲏⲧⲏⲥ

The phrase is a standard quotation formula used to introduce a biblical quote. The limestone's Coptic text is a translation of the Greek text of Mark 1:2a (Καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν [τῷ] Ἡσαΐᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ). It differs from the traditional Coptic translation presented in Horner's text

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[27] On the *nomina sacra*, see Colin H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in early Christian Egypt* (Oxford University Press, 1979) 26-48, esp. 36-37; cf. also the standard work by A. H. R. E. Paap, *Nomina Sacra in the Greek Papyri of the First Five Centuries* (Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava 8; Leiden, 1959); Paap's comprehensive study is updated by J. O'Callaghan, *Nomina Sacra in Papyris Graecis Neotestamentariis Saeculi III*, (Analecta Biblica 46; Rome, 1970) and in *Studia Papyrologica* 10 (1971) 99-122; see also the earlier study, still useful, by L. Traube, *Nomina Sacra* (Munich, 1906), and the discussions in S. Brown, "Concerning the Origin of the Nomina Sacra," in *Studia Papyrologica* 9 (1970) 7ff.

[28] There is, however, some evidence for such forms written without the supralinear stroke where it is expected; see Colin H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief* 32 and n 1, 33 and n 3. The following forms are also attested without supralinear strokes: κῳ (= κυρίῳ), και (= κύριαι [i.e., κύριε]) and χμγ (= Χ[ριστὸν] Μ[αρία] Γ[εννᾷ] see discussion at A.16), cf. *Supplementum Magicum I*, Robert W. Daniel and Franco Maltomini, eds. (Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990) 55-56 (§20.3) and *Supplementum Magicum II*, 55-56 (§62.2), 209-10 (§93.3).

which reflects the Greek more closely: ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲑⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲏϩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲏⲥⲁ̈ⲁⲥ ⲡⲉⲡⲣⲟⲫⲏⲧⲏⲥ.[29]

A.09: ⲙⲛ̄̇ for ⲁⳳⲱ
The scribe writes ⲙⲛ̄̇ where Horner's eclectic text reads ⲁⳳⲱ.[30]

A.10: ⲁⳳⲱ ⲛ̇ⲉⳳⲛⲟⳳⲧⲉ ⲡⲉ ⲡ̇ⲱⲁⲥⲉ
Literally, "and [a] God was the Word".

A.11-12: ⲡ]ⲉ[ϥ]ⲧⲟ̇ ⲛ̇ⲁⲣⲭⲏ̇ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⳳⲉⲧⲧⲉⲗⲓⲟ[ⲛ / ⲉ]ⲧⲟ̇[ⳳ]ⲁⲁ̇[ⲃ]
These two lines contain one of the most interesting and problematic sections of the limestone's texts, as the lines are heavily damaged and only partly legible, raising several issues for discussion.

The first few letter traces ([.]ⲉ[.]ⲧⲟ̇) must be near the beginning of the phrase, since John's incipit concludes at the end of the previous line. The next two words seem obvious enough, a reference to "the beginnings of the gospel" (cf. the similar phrase in A.03). Here "gospel" in the singular must be understood in its Pauline sense, as a body of proclaimed teaching, not as a literary genre or a codex containing such a text. The "beginnings" probably refers not to the incipits which precede, but the titles which follow and with the sense "the four beginnings [titles] of the one gospel story." That this is an introductory phrase for what follows is demonstrated by reference to similar passages in two other magical texts, both in Coptic sourcebooks. Papyrus Anastasy no. 9, a codex,[31] employs a similar phrase: ⲡⲁ̈ⲓ̈ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲧⲱⲱ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲭⲏ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉϥⲧⲟⲟⳳ ⲛⲉⳳⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ followed by each gospel's title and incipit, from Matthew through John. In this case, the phrase

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[29] The phrase, as represented in Horner, was also used as a quotation formula in Coptic homilies. See, for example, in a homily on the Virgin, ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲑⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲏϩ ϩⲛ̄ ⲓ̈ⲉⲍⲉⲕⲓⲏⲗ ⲡⲉⲡⲣⲟⲫⲏⲧⲏⲥ and ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲑⲉ ⲉⲧⲥⲏϩ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲙⲁⲑⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲛⲉⳳⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗⲓⲟⲛ in *Bala'izah*, 2 vols., Paul E. Kahle, ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) 455-62, esp. 456-57 (lines 40-43, 66-70).

[30] Horner does not indicate the presence of this reading elsewhere. The only other substitution, in the limestone texts, of ⲙⲛ̄̇ for ⲁⳳⲱ is at B.09, but there the ⲙⲛ̄̇ is part of the phrase borrowed from Acts 1:24; see discussion at B.01-09 (§b.iv).

[31] W. Pleyte and P. A. A. Boeser, *Manuscrits coptes du musée d'antiquités des Pays-bas à Leide* (Leiden: Brill, 1897) 441-79, esp. 477-78; Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 3.210 (§359); see also the introduction and English translation by R. Smith, "The Coptic Book of Ritual Power from Leiden," in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic* 311-322, esp. 322. On the identification of Anastasi and papyri related to this name, see Hans Dieter Betz, "Introduction to the Greek Magical Papyri" in *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*. Hans Dieter Betz, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) xlii-xliii; and W. R. Dawson, "Anastasi, Sallier, and Harris and Their Papyri," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 35 (1949) 158-66. Both the limestone and P. Anastasy no. 9 are said to come from Thebes.

which is similar to that in the limestone's text introduces what follows. The same conclusion is reached when comparing another Coptic manuscript, Papyrus Rylands 104 (§6), a much faded paper loose-leaf also functioning as a sourcebook.[32] Section 6 lists the titles of the four gospels, preceded by the relevant similar phrase: ⲧⲁⲣⲭⲏ ⲙⲡⲉⲩⲁⲅⲅⲉⲗ�prefix ⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ, followed by each gospel's title (ⲕⲁⲧⲁ + name) from Matthew through John, with no incipits. Note also that in this text from P. Rylands 104, the word "gospel" in the singular must also be understood in its Pauline sense, as a body of proclaimed teaching, not as a literary genre. The reconstruction of the words ⲡ]ⲉ[ⲩ]ⲧⲟ ⲛⲁⲣⲭⲏ and ⲉ]ⲧⲟ[ⲩ]ⲁⲁ[ⲃ] are based on only a few visible letters and ink traces, but also in reference to the parallel phrases from P. Anastasy no. 9 and P. Rylands 104 (§6) quoted above.

A.16: $\overline{\text{ⲙⲭⲅ}}$[

The top half of the third letter is lost to a lacuna chip. I read here m+x+g+. This is an otherwise unknown variation on the much discussed Greek scribal abbreviation $\overline{\text{ΧΜΓ}}$, probably for the phrase Χ(ριστὸν) Μ(αρία) Γ(εννᾷ), i.e., "Mary bore Christ" (with Mary as nominative subject). The most recent and useful summary of interpretive options is by Tomasz Derda[33] who argues that Χριστός as the nominative subject of the phrase is quite possible, resulting in Χ(ριστός) Μ(αρίας) Γ(έννα)/Γ(έννημα), that is, "Christ, the offspring of Mary" (Derda, 179-84). He also suggests, perhaps rightly so, that the symbol was polyvalent already in antiquity.[34] In our text, however, either we have an error resulting from a simple metathesis of letters, or we have a special form in which Mary's name is emphasized and given priority in a Marian slogan, perhaps through a Coptic misunderstanding of the original Greek phrase. Derda discusses and provides bibliography for other attested variations, such as ΧΘΓ and ΧΓΘΕ (183 n 19), ΧΜ and ΧΜΑΩ (183 and n 21), ΚΜΓ and ΘΜΓ (186 and nn 30-34), ΧΜΓΡ (187 and nn35-38), ΓΜΧ (186 n 34), and ΧΣΜΓ (182). However, none of these variations begins as does our text, with mu.

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[32] W. E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the Collection of the John Rylands Library Manchester* (Manchester: The University Press, 1909) 53-55 (§104); Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 2.212-13 (§LI).

[33] Tomasz Derda, *Deir el-Naqlun: The Greek Papyri (P. Naqlun I)* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1995) see the appendix, "The Christian Symbol XMG," 179-87.

[34] See Derda for further bibliography on other options by J. O. Tjäder, S. R. Llewellyn, A. Gostoli (followed by G. Robinson), and A. Blanchard; and the discussion and bibliography in *Supplementum Magicum II*, 55-56 (§62. 2).

A.17-18: ⳓ̈ⲥ̇ ⲡⲱⲏⲣⲉ̇ ⲙ̅(vacat)/[ⲡⲛⲟⲩ]ⲧⲉ ⲉⲧⲉⲛ̅ⲩ̇.
The supralinear stroke over the *nomen sacrum* may have faded or worn away (see discussion on A.03). The two dots over iota are clear, evidencing against reading the *nomen sacrum* ⲭ̇ⲥ̇ (i.e., ⲭ̅ⲥ̅) at this point. The scribe apparently did not want to divide the word ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ between two lines, so he left the rest of line 17 vacant and began the word on line 18. The words ⲡⲱⲏⲣⲉ ⲙ̅ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ were discussed at A.03 as a famous textual variant; here the phrase appears as an independent liturgical phrase preceded by the *nomen sacrum* and followed by ⲉⲧⲉⲛ̅ⲩ̇.

A.19: ⲣⲣⲣ
The three Coptic tau-rho crosses are not of the same style (see discussion of B.16). In the first cross, both the horizontal and vertical strokes are curved. The second cross, perhaps emphasized as the central cross of Christ (cf. Matt 27:38; Luke 23:33; John 19:18) is slightly larger and has a noticably thicker vertical post with a large angular upper loop. The upper part of the third cross is missing, probably through abrasion, and the cross itself is written like the first cross, but without the curved lines.[35] As noted, the drilled hole occurs between the first and second crosses. Such crosses had a widespread usage in early Christian texts, from quality biblical codices to vulgar documents, and are often found at the beginnings and, more commonly, at the endings of magical texts. They are often written in groups of three or more, are often preceded by a concluding "amen," sometimes written in combination with names of saints or living persons for whom prayers are offered, and occasionally with Christian symbols including *nomina sacra*.

B.01-09: ⲥⲓⲙⲱⲛ ... / ... ⲁⲃⲱ ⲙⲁⲑⲑⲓⲁⲥ.
(a) Name lists were a common feature of ancient religious texts and can be found as far back as the third millenium BCE in Mesopotamia and Egypt. Such lists have their origin in the name lists of various Goddesses and Gods, angelic or demonic beings, and even human heroes who were invoked for their protection, or identified by their

[35] On the tau-rho staurogram, a standard Christian scribal abbreviation for ὁ σταυρός ("cross"), see Erich Dinkler, *Signum Crucis* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1967) 177-78; Kurt Aland, "Bemerkungen zum Alter und zur Entstehung des Christogrammes," in idem, *Studien auf Überlieferung des Neuen Testaments und seines Textes* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967) 173-79, and Wolfgang Wischmeyer, "Christogramm und Staurogramm in den lateinischen Inschriften altkirchlicher Zeit," in Carl Andresen and Günther Klein, eds., *Theologia Crucis — Signum Crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinkler* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck. 1979) 539-50; cf. also Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief*, 35-36, esp. 35 n 3.

names so as to hinder or employ their negative influence. The later lists of apostles' names were already popularized by the end of the first century in gospels and other texts, though they are rare in magic.[36] I suggest that the lists of apostles' names in magical texts originated as replacements for the lists of names in non-Christian ritual texts from which these latter ritualists derived the genre. The twelve apostles were understood to be guarantors of the teaching and divine power transmitted from Jesus to the current Coptic Christian communities.[37] The ritualist's logic here probably relates to the concept of *historiola,* that simply listing or speaking the apostles' names has the same ritual effect as narrating stories about them, that is, that such a list can introduce into a contemporary and problematic human situation the same liberating divine power once active in the lives of the apostles as described in the narratives about them.[38] Such was the fame of the apostles and the divine power at their disposal, that the writers of Christian magical texts simply refered to them in passing as "the twelve apostles" without actually listing the names.[39]

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[36] Cf. Matt 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13, 23-26; *Epist. Apost.* chap. 2; see also the discussions and bibliography in Wolfgang A. Bienert, "The Picture of the Apostle in the Early Christian Tradition," in Wilhelm Schneemelcher and R. McL. Wilson, eds. *New Testament Apocrypha:* Vol. Two: *Writings Related to the Apostles, Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992) esp. 14-20.

[37] See, for example, the following texts which all promote, in various ways, a guarantee of the integrity of apostolic teaching during the transmission process: Matt 13:52; Luke 1:1-4; 1 Cor 15:1-3a; *Ap. Jas.* 2,1-15a; *Epist. Apost.* chap. 2; and the quotes from Papias who sought oral teaching *directly* from the students of the apostles (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*. 3.39.4).

[38] The so-called Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles were major contributors to these beliefs about the divine power inherent in the words and actions of the apostles. The most important of these were the *Acts of Andrew*, *Acts of John*, *Acts of Paul*, *Acts of Peter* and *Acts of Thomas*. See the discussions and texts in Wilhelm Schneemelcher and Knut Schäferdiek, "Second and Third-Century Acts of Apostles," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:75-411.

[39] This abbreviated form of accessing the divine power once accessible to the twelve apostles, is found in at least two early Christian magical texts. The first (P. Berol. 11347) is found in a paper amulet for healing and protection, but it seems to be naively unaware that Judas is present in that corporate group of twelve, "ⲉⲕⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲯⲁⲣⲁⲓ ⲙⲡⲃ̄ ⲛⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲉⲧⲙⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡ ⲡⲯⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ," on which, see Walter Beltz, "Die koptischen Zauberpapiere und Zauberostraka der Papyrus-Sammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 31 (1985) 32-35; Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptisches Zaubertexte* 2.113-17; and Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic* 117-19, esp. 119. The second such text (London Or. Ms. 4721 [5]) is another ritual text for protection, this one against violent attack, where we read, "If a battle arises against us ... recite ... the name of the twelve apostles," on which, see W. E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1905) 255; Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptisches Zaubertexte* 2.69-70; and Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic* 129.

(b) This apostles name list is ultimately derived from the list in Luke 6:14-16. The names of the apostles and their order are the same between the two lists, but see (b.v) below.

(b.i) Use of ⲱ for ⲟ: This vowel shift occurs four times on the limestone and always in names: ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃⲱⲥ for ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃⲟⲥ (B.02, 05; 08);[40] ⲃⲁⲣⲑⲱⲗⲱⲙⲁⲓⲟⲥ for ⲃⲁⲣⲑⲟⲗⲟⲙⲁⲓⲟⲥ (B.04). Crum notes that ⲟ shifts to ⲱ in Bohairic (Crum, 253a, with examples) and "in inaccurate, esp *F* texts ⲱ for ⲟ & ⲟ for ⲱ often" (Crum, 517b, with ⲓⲁⲕⲟⲃ as an example); Kahle notes that "in early literary texts this is comparatively rare ... in the non-literary texts this is common in all districts" (Kahle, 82 §44). Horner's Bohairic text of Acts 1:13a lists one manuscript (N) that also reads ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃⲱⲥ.

(b.ii) Use of ϵ for ⲏ: This vowel shift occurs once: ⲥϵⲗⲱⲧⲏⲥ for ϫⲏⲗⲱⲧⲏⲥ (B.07). Crum notes the shift is common in Greek words (Crum, 50a [§f], with examples), though in Greek texts its converse (ⲏ for ϵ) is rare (Crum, 66a §b, with examples); Kahle lists other Greek words evidencing the same shift (Kahle, 75 §34; cf. the converse, 70-71 §22).

(b.iii) Use of ⲥ for ϫ: This consonantal shift from the voiced to the voiceless fricative occurs once in the limestone: ⲥϵⲗⲱⲧⲏⲥ for ϫⲏⲗⲱⲧⲏⲥ (B.07). Kahle notes that the shift "is sometimes found in Greek words and names" (Kahle, 95 §69; cf. 127 §104; 127-28 §106); Crum notes that ⲥ "varies with ϫ ... and initial ⲯ" (Crum, 313a), though the converse ϫ for ⲥ is rare (Crum, 65a, with examples). Loprieno states that the phoneme /z/ is "present only in Greek borrowings" with "rare exceptions" (41 [§3.6.1]). As early as classical Middle Egyptian, the glyphs representing the phonemes /s/ and /z/ were often interchangeable, depending on the preference of the scribe.

(b.iv) Use of ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ and ⲁϥⲱ: Coptic Luke consistently uses ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ between all names, while the limestone text omits it three times, but twice with no replacement (B.04, 05) and once replacing it with ⲁϥⲱ (B.09).[41]

(b.v) Editing: At the list's end, the author has deleted the full name of Judas Isacriot and the phrase regarding his actions: ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲓⲟϥⲇⲁⲥ ⲡⲓⲥⲕⲁⲣⲓⲱⲧⲏⲥ ⲡⲁⲓ ⲉⲛⲧⲁϥⲯⲱⲡⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲟⲇⲟⲧⲏⲥ. Both the name "Judas

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[40] I supply ⟦ⲱⲥ, rather than ⟦ⲟⲥ at the end of line 02 in reference to the clear reading ⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃⲱⲥ in lines 05 and 08.

[41] ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ generally is used for Greek μετά, σύν, πρός, ἐν. The presence of ⲁϥⲱ for Greek καί here is due to the borrowed phrase ⲁϥⲱ ⲙⲁⲑⲑⲓⲁⲥ (καί Μαθθίαν) which the scribe has taken from Acts 1:23; see below.

Iscariot" and the vice-word "traitor" (προδότης)[42] would provide an unwanted negative influence in the sympathetic text. Judas was elsewhere relegated in Christian magic to the position of a powerful negative agent in aggressive magic employed to destroy social relationships.[43] In the limestone, the author simply adds both the conjunction and the name Maththias (Judas' replacement) directly from Acts 1:23 (καί Μαθθίαν): ⲁⲧⲱ ⲙⲁⲑⲑⲓⲁⲥ. The influence of Luke's two books is evident throughout this name list, as the author or his source now edits Luke 6:14-16 in the light of Acts 1:23. There appears in line 09 to have been an erased letter, or more probably a dark and rough surface which could not be inscribed, between ⲁ and ⲑ. The small horizontal stroke at the end of the line and the long horizontal line between lines 09 and 10 signal the end of a text unit, i.e., the list of apostles' names.

B.10-11: ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲃⲣⲁⲁ[ⲁⲙ] / ⲙⲛ ⲓⲥⲁⲕ: ⲙⲛ ⲓⲁⲕⲱ[ⲃ]

The original quote is in the form: Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ πατρός σου, Θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Θεὸς Ἰακώβ (LXX/Exo 3:6). The quote, with variations, is widespread in diverse early Christian writings including magical texts.[44] This standard quote is then extended in lines

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[42] The word occurs in early Christian vice lists (e.g., Acts 7:52; 2 Tim 3:4: *Sheph. Herm. Sim.* 19.3).

[43] This avoidance of Judas' name is paralleled by its necessary inclusion in at least two aggressive Coptic curse amulets. The first example (P. Louvre E.14.250) is shaped in the form of a knife blade employed to destroy social relationships, and which even speaks, saying, "I am that which raised Judas against ... Jesus until he was crucified," on which, see Étienne Drioton, "Parchemin magique copte provenant d'Edfou" *Muséon* 59 (1946) 479-89; see the introduction and English translation in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic* 218-222, esp. 221. The second example (London Or. Ms. 5986) is a rolled papyrus amulet containing a curse text meant to destroy enemies, and employs the phrase, "Number them with Judas on the day of judgment," on which, see W. E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the British Museum* 506-07; Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptisches Zaubertexte* 2.225-27; and Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic* 187-88, esp. 188.

[44] In gospels, see Matt 8:11; 22:32; Luke 13:28; 20:37; cf. Acts 3:13. More recently, see the new Coptic reference in P. Berol. 22220, frag. 1F (A), lines 40-44 (= *Gos. Sav.* 14.19) in C. Hedrick and P. Mirecki, *Gospel of the Savior: A New Ancient Gospel* (California Classical Library 2; Polebridge, 1999) 46-47, 111. On the use of the phrase in ancient magic, see *PGM* XII.287; XIII.817, 976; XXXV.14; and *PGM* 21.31. See also M. Rist, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. A Liturgical Formula," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 57 (1938) 289-303; A. Delatte and P. Derchain, *Les intailles magiques gréco-égypiennes* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1964) p. 34 no. 26; and Roy Kotansky, "Two Amulets in the Getty Museum: A Gold Amulet for Aurelia's Epilepsy, An Inscribed Magical-Stone for Fever, 'Chills,' and Headache," in *J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 8 (1980) 180-84.

12-15 with phrases referring to the prophets and the righteous. These two extensions have the theological effect of creating a direct line in a spiritual genealogy from Abraham, through the prophets to, perhaps, recent martyrs in Coptic Christian communities.[45]

B.12-13a: ⲙⲛ ⲛⲉⲡⲣⲟⲫⲏⲧⲏ[ⲥ] / ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ
This extended phrase is also found after the LXX quote in Luke 13:28 (ὅταν ὄψησθε Θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακὼβ καὶ πάντας τοὺς προφήτας), again demonstrating that the author of the limestone's text, or his source, is exhibiting readings found in the Gospel of Luke.[46] Like the list of apostles' names, lists of the names of prophets are quite rare in magical texts.[47] The absence here of an actual list of prophets' names does not lessen the availability of divine power which was evident in the lives of the prophets, since the ritualist can access that power simply by writing or speaking the simple phrase "and all the prophets."[48]

B.13b-14a: ⲙⲛ ⲛⲁⲓ[ⲁ/ⲕ]ⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ
Yet another phrase is added to the LXX quote. It is elsewhere found following the LXX quote, as obscurely listed in Horner's critical apparatus for Luke 13:28: "παντ. τ. δικαιους Marc (Epiph Tert)," evidencing another relation between the limestone and the Gospel of Luke. A similar phrase is found in a Greek Christian magical text (PGM 2P.5b = P. Oxy. 1151) which, after naming four saints, cuts to the quick by simply stating καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων. Unlike the name lists of apostles and prophets, name lists of righteous persons (usually

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[45] Note a similar logic for the original readers of Heb 11:17-12:1.

[46] Luke exhibits an editorial tendency by twice expanding this LXX quote with such phrases: ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲡⲣⲟⲫⲏⲧⲏⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ (Luke 13:28) and ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲓⲟⲧⲉ (Acts 3:13).

[47] The previously discussed inscribed and painted walls of the grotto chapel in the Thebaid (see n 14) also contain both gospel incipits and a partially damaged list of prophets names: Jeremiah, Isaiah, Nahum (?), Zachariah and Malachi. The grotto is, of course, not "magical" in the outmoded Frazerian sense, so here we see that the old categories of analysis do not conform well to the evidence. Clearly the grotto's inscribed walls with gospel incipits and name lists were all part of the larger ritual context in which that sacred space of the grotto was empowered through the paintings, sacred words and names which surrounded the ritual participant.

[48] This tendency toward abbreviation can also be seen in the scribe of a Coptic amulet (P. Berol. 8324) who, instead of actually writing the 14 names, simply writes a reference to them "the seven names of Mary, seven of the archangels," in Walter Beltz, "Die koptischen Zauberpapyri der Papyrus-Sammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin," *Archiv für Payrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 29 (1983) 74; Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 2.215-16.

saints or martyrs) are much more commonly found in magical texts, perhaps due to the fact that they were considered intercessors.[49] Again, the absence of an actual list of the names of righteous persons does not hinder access to the divine power which was evident in the lives of the righteous, since the ritualist accesses that power simply by writing or speaking the simple phrase "and all the righteous."

B.14b-15a: ⲡⲁ[/ⲉⲛⲉϩ]
The liturgical word actually concludes the phrases begun in line 10. Alternate reconstructions could be ⲡⲁ[ⲉ/ⲛⲉϩ] or ⲡⲁ[ⲉⲛ/ⲉϩ].

B.15: ϩⲁⲙ[(vacat)]ⲏⲛ
This "Amen," which occurs only here on the limestone, indicates that the texts on both sides are to be read beginning with what I call side A, across to what I call side B, where the texts end with an appropriate concluding "Amen." This is further indicated by the observation that side A provides a cleaner, broader and smoother writing surface than side B, suggesting that the scribe apparently selected side A as the initial writing surface.

B.16:] ⲫ ⲫ [
There were probably three crosses inscribed here, as on side A, and one has been lost to abrasion or a lacuna. Both of these crosses are the same size and style (see discussion of A.19).[50]

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[49] Examples of such name lists of righteous persons can be found in P. Anastasy no. 9, "the forty martyrs of Sebaste" and "the seven sleepers of Ephesus"; for texts and bibliography, see Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*, 2.219-21 (§§LXII-LXIV); and the introduction and English translation by R. Smith, "The Coptic Book of Ritual Power from Leiden," in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic* 311-22, esp. 322 (§§6-7).

[50] I am indebted to the following agencies whose generous support allowed me to travel to and throughout Europe in the summer of 1993 to study Greek and Coptic manuscripts in Oxford, London and Berlin: the National Endowment for the Humanities (summer stipend); the University of Kansas General Research Fund; and the Friends of the Department of Religious Studies (Lawrence, KS).

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PART TWO

DEFINITIONS AND THEORY

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GREAT SCOTT!
THOUGHT AND ACTION ONE MORE TIME

Jonathan Z. Smith
University of Chicago

For me, a keenly anticipated pleasure in attending each year's meeting, during the 1970s, of Hans Dieter Betz's project on the Greek magical papyri, sponsored by the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, was the evident delight which a growing number of participants took in demonstrating their increasing prowess at pronouncing the magical names and formulae. I should like to propose the addition of one other magical name to that repertoire, one that appears in the thaumatic ejaculation, "Great Scott!" I reject out of hand the unimaginative lexicographical suggestion that the phrase refers to the fabled fussiness of the American General Winfield Scott,[1] a hero of the War of 1812 and the 1846-48 Mexican campaign, unsuccessful Whig Party presidential candidate in 1852, and the author of a dull, two-volume set of dutiful memoirs of a decidedly non-magical cast.[2]

I doubt that even a Philo or a Heidegger, in their most etymologically extreme moments, would attempt to derive the name Scot[t] from that archaic Indo-European root **skot*, meaning 'dark,' yielding the English 'shade,' or 'shadow.'[3] It is a semantic field with promising magical connotations, as, for example, in the group of *skotos*-words deployed some thirty times in the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*[4] including five nominal uses (*PGM* IV.1114, 2564, 2855; XIII.268; XXXVI.138); but, while tempting, such an association is clearly a 'false friend.'

Also, I must concede that 'Scot[t]' is merely an ethnic designation for uncertain derivation, employed in later Latin. From the fourth century on, to designate Irishmen (*Scotti*),[5] in Old English (*Scottas*), for both Scots and Irish, and by Middle English (*Scottes*), limited to Scots.[6] 'Scotland' (i.e., *Scotia*) appears to be a tenth or eleventh century name, replacing the older 'Calendonia.'[7] While in the realm of cultural

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1 E. Partridge, *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* 7th ed. (New York, 1970) 351.
2 W. Scott, *Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Scott, L.L.D.* (New York, 1894) vols. 1-2.
3 J. Pokorny, *Indogermanisches Etymologisches Worterbuch* (Bern, 1959) 957.
4 K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1928-41) 3:177.
5 A. Souter, *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.* (Oxford, 1996) 368.
6 *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'Scot' and 'Scotland.'
7 H. T. Buckle, *History of Civilization in England* 2nd ed. (London, 1885) 3:10, n. 7.

stereotypes, Scotland and Ireland were associated with primitivity, superstition and magic;[8] while Scottish antiquarians have produced a host of works detailing regional supernatural folk beliefs, such as the wonderfully titled late seventeenth century work by the clergyman, Robert Kirk, who claimed to have been abducted by fairies, which reads, in part: *Subterranean and for the most part Invisible People, heretofore going under the name of Elves, Fawnes, and Fairies, or the like, Among the Low Country Scots as they are described by those who have the second sight, and now, to occasion further enquiry, collected and compared by a circumspect enquirer residing among the Scottish-Irish in Scotland*;[9] and while Scotland's witchcraft trials have formed the centerpiece of Christina Larner's important works,[10] these are all too slender a set of threads on which to depend a thesis.

Rather, I should like to call attention to the fact that the name 'Scot[t].' in either of its orthographies (one final *t* or two), recurs too frequently in the history of western magic to be thought accidental. The series should properly begin with the medieval figure of Michael Scot, translator of Aristotle, contributor to the 'Book of Secrets' tradition, and an important character in the development of the European magus-legend.[11] For this essay, I will shorten the chronological range,

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[8] See, among others, P. Thorsley, "The Wild Man's Revenge," in E. Dudley and M. E. Novak, eds., *The Wild Man Within* (Pittsburgh, 1972) 259-80, esp. 292-94; N. Carlin, "Ireland and Natural Man in 1649," in F. Barker, et al., *Europe and Its Others* (Colchester, 1985) 2:91-111; J. Th. Leerssen, "On the Edge of Europe: Ireland in Search of Oriental Roots, 1650-1850," *Comparative Criticism* 8 (1986) 91-112. Note that this stereotype is affirmed for Scotland in Scott's *Letters* 88-90 (see full citation below, n. 15).

[9] R. Kirk, *Subterranean and for the most part Invisible People* .... (Edinburgh, 1691; reprinted, with additions, 1763, 1815). See the important reprint, with commentary, by Andrew Lang, *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies: A Study in the Folk-Lore and Psychical Research. The text by Robert Kirk, M.A., Minister of Aberfoyle, A.D. 1691. The Comment by Andrew Lang, M.A., A.D. 1893* (London, 1893; reprint: Stirling, 1953).

[10] C. Larner, *Scottish Demonology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (diss. University of Edinburgh, 1962); C. Larner, C. Lee and H. McLachlan, ed., *Source-Book of Scottish Witchcraft* (Glasgow, 1977); C. Larner, "Two Late Scottish Witchcraft Tracts: Witch-Craft Proven and The Tryl of Witchcraft," in S. Anglo, ed., *The Damned Art: Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft* (London, 1977) 227-45; C. Larner, *Enemies of God: The Witchhunt in Scotland* (London, 1981); C. Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (Oxford, 1984).

See further the standard works: C. K. Sharpe, *A Historical Account of the Belief in Witchcraft in Scotland* (London, 1884); F. Legge, "Witchcraft in Scotland," *Scottish Review* 18 (1891) 257-88; G. F. Black, *A Calendar of Cases of Witchcraft in Scotland, 1510-1727* (New York, 1938); H. C. Lea, *Materials Toward a History of Witchcraft* (Philadelphia, 1939; reprint: New York, 1957) esp. 3:1325-49.

[11] See. J. Ferguson, *Bibliographical Notes on the Works of Michael Scott* (Glasgow, 1931). Useful studies include, W. Godwin, *Lives of the Necromancers: or, an Account of the Most Eminent Persons in Successive Ages, who have claimed for Themselves, or to have been Imputed by Others, the Exercises of Magical Power* (London, 1834; 2nd ed., Guildford,

and focus on three figures each standing as emblematic of a larger set of issues: Reginald Scot and two of the several Walter Scotts. Readers should be grateful in advance for this economy. I decided not to strain your patience with more minor figures, such as Patrick Scot, a Seventeenth century author of a work on the Philosopher's Stone, which prompted a rejoinder by Robert Fludd,[12] or yet another Walter Scott, a famous card-sharp and master of card tricks of the 1930s who earned the sobriquet, 'the Phantom of the Card Table,'[13] nor by extending the linguistic field further and including names such as 'Schott,' as in the seventeenth century occult philosopher, Gaspar (or, Caspar) Schott, author of the four-volume *Universal Magic of Nature and Art*, as well as a collection of three hundred magic tricks.[14]

Following a typological rather than a chronological order, allow me to begin with the well-known novelist and antiquarian, Sir Walter Scott, and his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft Addressed to J. G. Lockhart, Esq.*, first published in 1830, two years before his death.[15] While the argumentative schema is somewhat flaccid, the work remains important for its wide ranging archival character, drawing on published, manuscript and oral sources in so effective a manner that

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1876); J. W. Brown, *An Enquiry into the Life and Legend of Michael Scot* (Edinburgh, 1897) L. Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science* (New York, 1923-58) 2:303-337, et passim; Ch. Hawkins, *Studies in the History of Medieval Science* (Cambridge, MA., 1924) 272-98; L. Thorndike, *Michael Scot* (London, 1965).

[12] P. Scott, *The Tillage of Light, or, a true discoverie of the philosophicall Elixir, commonly called the Philosopher's Stone* (London, 1623). Robert Fludd's unpublished manuscript, "Truth's Golden Arrow" was a rejoinder to Scott. See now, C. H. Josten, "Truth's Golden Arrow," *Ambix* 3 (1948) 91-150.

[13] See the anecdotal biography, E. McGuire, *The Phantom of the Card Table*, published by the Gambler's Book Club (Nevada, 1959).

[14] G. Schott, *Magia universalis naturae et artis* (Würzburg, 1657-59) vols. 1-4; G. Schott, *Joco-seriorum naturae et artis, sive Magiae naturalis centuriae tres* (Würzburg, 1665). Schott is best known for his commentary, *Schola steganographica* (Nuremberg, 1665) on Trithemius of Würzburg's *Steganographia, hoc est, ars per occultam scripturam animi sui voluntatem absentibus speriendi certa* (Darmstadt, 1606). For an important note on Schott's other works, including *Physica curiosa* (Würzburg, 1662), *Technica curiosa* (Nuremberg, 1664) and *Magia optica* (Bomberg, 1671) see, R. L. Colie, *Paradoxia Epidemica: The Renaissance Tradition of Paradox* (Princeton, 1966) 305-328. See further, below, n. 25.

[15] All citations, above, are to the first edition, Walter Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft Addressed to J. G. Lockhart, Esq.* (London, 1830) in the series, The Family Library, 15. John Gibson Lockhart was Scott's son-in-law and official biographer. The work was been separately reprinted many times (London, 1831, 1876, 1883; New York, 1845, 1874, 1885) and separately translated into Italian (Milan, 1839) and Spanish (Barcelona, 1876). See further, C. O. Parsons, *Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott's Fiction with Chapters on the Supernatural in Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh and London, 1964) and R. M. Dorson, *The British Folklorists: A History* (Chicago, 1968) 107-118. In working on Scott, I have been much influenced by the general approach of D. Forbes, "The Rationalism of Sir Walter Scott," *Cambridge Journal* 7 (1953) 20-35.

it has been called "the first full-scale treatise in English on what before long would be called folklore."[16] But it does have an overall point of view, one that is representative of one of the positions I wish to invite reflection upon in this essay.

In Scott's *Letters*, witchcraft, demonology and magic are all understood as beliefs. If actions are noted, they occur within his sources and are rarely taken up by Scott for discussion. The central issues are the origins of, and the reasons for the persistence of this mass of 'superstitious' lore. He finds the "credulity of our ancestors" (2) to be matched by the contemporary "popular credulity" (13), the whole constituting a "dark chapter in human nature" (2), testifying to the "infectious character of superstition" (13). Given this agendum, Scott's *Letters* finds its place on a trajectory reaching from the British tradition of clerical folklorists concerned with identifying and repressing 'heathen' practices (whether ancient, or Roman Catholic), best represented by the complex publishing history of Henry Bourne's, *Antiquitates Vulgares; or, the Antiquities of the Common People*, first published in 1725,[17] to the more 'scientific' and global work of E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (1871) with its focus on the documentary character of "survivals," a

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[16] Dorson, *The British Folklorists* 115.

[17] H. Bourne, *Antiquitates Vulgares: or, the Antiquities of the Common People, Giving an Account of their Opinions and Ceremonies. With Proper Reflections upon each of them; Shewing which may be Retain'd, and which ought to be Laid Aside* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1725). Bourne was the curate of the All Hallows Church and, as the final clause of the subtitle indicates, was interested, above all, in purifying practice, especially that associated with holidays, from both "popish" and "heathen" influence. (See further, J. Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine* [Chicago, 1990] 21-22 and n. 36). Bourne's work was later revised and supplemented by John Brand, rector of St. Mary-at-Hill and St. Mary Hubbard (London), *Observation on Popular Antiquities: including the whole of Mr. Bourne's Antiquitates Vulgares* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1777; reprinted London, 1810). In 1813, the work achieved its most frequently reprinted form. It was revised, supplemented and reordered by a trained antiquarian, Sir Henry Ellis, Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford; Principal Librarian of the British Museum, and a Director and Joint-Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries. Ellis employed, among other sources, the large, unpublished manuscript of John Aubrey's, *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme*, on deposit at the British Museum since 1698—subsequently edited and annotated by J. Britten (London, 1881) in the series, Publications of the Folk-lore Society, 4. Ellis's revision was published under the title, *Observations on Popular Antiquities Chiefly Illustrating the Origin of our Vulgar Customs, Ceremonies, and Superstitions, by John Brand with the Additions of Sir Henry Ellis* (London, 1813, and frequently reprinted, including London editions of 1840, 1841, 1847, 1849, 1888, 1913). A less successful fourth version (London, 1870; reprinted 1905) was reedited and reorganized by the man of letters and bibliographer William Carew Hazlitt (not to be confused with his more famous grandfather, William Hazlitt)). The use of Bourne-Brand-Ellis as the foundation document in English folklore manuals continued. For example, it was thoroughly ransacked in a late example of the genre, William S. Walsh, *Curiosities of Popular Customs and of Rites, Ceremonies, Observances, and Miscellaneous Antiquities* (Philadelphia and London, 1900).

text which serves as one of the foundation documents of anthropology.[18]

Indeed, in his first *Letter*, Scott anticipates Tylor's theory of animism. The belief in a human spirit comes from dreams, "somnambulism and other nocturnal deceptions" (8). But Scott goes further, offering a medical etiology for apparitions (15-48) as resulting from a sensory "disorder" which "is not properly insanity, although it is somewhat allied to that most horrible of maladies" (15). He notes as well the possible influence of "intoxicating drugs" (20-21). In a manner typical of Tylor's and Frazer's later explanation of magic, for Scott, a mistaken subjective experience is here erroneously taken as an objective occurrence (48).

The second *Letter* begins with biblical materials. Scott argues that the "witches of Scripture had probably some resemblance to those of ancient Europe" and that neither were involved with Satanism. If there was theological error, it was that of idolatry (53-36). It is from these two ancient bases that magic was transmitted to Christianity, especially by "more ignorant converts to the Christian faith" (86). Magic in Christendom is thus a result of "borrowing," it is a "survival" from the "ruins of paganism" and the "wreck of classical mythology" (86). This explanation will be insisted upon throughout the work (91-92, 99-120, 178 *et passim*).

It is only, Scott argues, in the Middle Ages that a "regular system of demonology" evolved (86). From what sources? *Letters* three through five are devoted to this topic. While he notes Zoroastrian dualism (87-88) and Celtic traditions (88-90), it is Norse religion (96-117), and most especially European "fairy superstition" (118-172) which have most hold on his attention. With respect to the former, he concludes, "there were originals enough in the mythology of the Goths as well as Celts, to furnish the modern attributes ascribed to Satan in later times" (116). The matter of fairies is more complex, representing a long-standing preoccupation of Scott[19] as well as the

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[18] E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London, 1871) vols. 1-2. See further, M. T. Hodgen, *The Doctrine of Survivals: A Chapter in the History of Scientific Method in the Study of Man* (London, 1936).

[19] In *Letters*. 120, note Scott refers to his essay, "On the Fairies of Popular Superstition," developed, in part, with the assistance of the philologist John Leyden (see, H. J. C. Grierson, *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott* [London, 1932-37] 9:485). The essay appeared in Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, Consisting of Historical and Romantic Ballads, Collected in the Southern Counties of Scotland; with a Few of Modern Date, Founded upon Local Tradition* (Kelso, 1802-1803) vols. 1-3. I cite the 4th ed., *Minstrelsy* (Edinburgh, 1810) 2:109-186, cf. 1:xc-cvi, esp. xcix. See further the usefully annotated edition by T. C. Henderson, ed., *Sir Walter Scott's Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (New York, 1902) 2:300-397.

most original and promising contribution of the *Letters*.[20] Put simply, Scott traces the origins of fairies "properly so called" to the "invention of Celtic peoples" (120, 123, 129-30 *et passim*). Fairies are understood to dispense gifts of supernatural power, especially charms and knowledge of the future. This was useful to practitioners of "the petty arts of deception," who could reassure their "credulous" clients of the harmlessness of their "impostures" by claiming either to have received the gift as a boon from fairies or, in its more hostile form, as a result of having been kidnapped and "transported to fairyland" (142-44). When witchcraft and satanism were outlawed, the same "pretense of communication with Elfland" allowed the "imposters" to "avoid [the] consequences of witchcraft" (144), this being the origin of the distinction between 'white' (fairy) and 'black' (satanic) magic (143-44). Thus "the fairy superstition which ... was much the older of the two, came to bear upon, and have connexion with that horrid belief in witchcraft" (172).

Letters six through nine deal explicitly with witchcraft and witchcraft trials, offering a series of explanations for the phenomenon. First, it was the all but intended result of Christian suppression of popular beliefs, a process which precipitated out the more vulnerable and benign "fairy superstition" while leaving 'black magic' in place. Second, science, undeveloped at the time, could accomodate magic as an explanatory and experimental system—he adduces the example of Agrippa—but found "fairy land" childish (173-92). Third, witchcraft became a crime because it was linked by various sorts of Christians to heresy; fourth, because it afforded the state an opportunity to prosecute individuals "whom it might not have been possible to convict of any other crime;" and fifth, because, in other cases, personal vengeance played a role in bringing accusations (195-201).

Scott spend a good bit of time reviewing the various witch trials in continental Europe (211-222), England (223-82), and Scotland (283-343), the latter two countries taking up the whole of *Letters* eight and nine. We need not pause over these, except to call attention to Scott's documentary observation, central to later researchers, "Other superstitions arose and decayed" leaving little trace "depending upon the inaccurate testimony of vague report and of doting tradition." The legal context of witchcraft is quite different. "[W]e have before us the recorded evidence" which provides the modern scholar with "the best chance of obtaining an accurate view of the subject" (224).

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[20] See, Dorson, *British Folklorists* 117, "This association of fairy and witch foreshadows the point that would be made by Katherine Briggs in *The Anatomy of Puck* ([London,] 1959), on the blending and merging of spectral and malevolent beings."

Scott concludes the final *Letter*, largely devoted to astrology (344-51) and apparitions (351-401), both of which he considers independent of witchcraft and demonology, with a rationalist's progressive creed:

> [E]very generation of the human race must swallow a certain measure of nonsense. There remains hope, however, that the grosser faults of our ancestors are now out of date; and that whatever follies the present race may be guilty of, the sense of humanity is too universally spread to permit them to think of tormenting wretches till they confess what is impossible, and then burning them for their pains. (402)

I have reviewed Scott's work of 1830 because it illustrates the sorts of issues raised by taking the position that magic, and associated phenomena, are essentially matters of thought and belief. Such an approach leads most scholars to an evaluation of magic's claims with respect to truth. While the confidence of a Frazer now seems extreme—"all magic is necessarily false and barren; for were it ever to become true and friutful, it would no longer be magic but science"[21]—some explicit or implicit negative evaluation is common. For this reason, etiological concerns predominate, and Scott has deployed the full repertoire: genealogical histories, psychological explanations, world-view contextualizations, and socio-political understandings.

While I shall return to these more general questions, let me introduce the second of our three Scot[t]s, an individual likewise concerned with witchcraft, Reginald Scot, author of *The discouerie of witchcraft*, first published in 1584.[22] It is a work that is justly celebrated in almost every general study of European witchcraft for its scepticism, a viewpoint better captured by one of the three versions of the title

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[21] J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* 3rd ed. (London, 1911-15) 1:222.

[22] Reginald Scott, *The discouerie of witchcraft, wherein the lewde dealing of witches and witchmongers is notablie detected, the knauerie of coniurors, the impietie of inchantors, the follie of soothsaiers, the impudent falsehood of cousenors, the infideelitie of atheists, the pestilent practices of Pythonists, the curiositie of figure casters, the vanitie of dreamers, the beggerlie art of Alcumysterie, the abomination of idolatrie, the horrible art of poisoning, the vertue of power of naturall magick, and all the conieiances of Legierdemaine and iuggling are deciphered: and many other things opened, which haue long lien hidden, howbeit verie necessarie to be knowne*, 1st ed. (London, 1584); 2nd ed. (London, 1651; reprinted London, 1654); 3rd ed. (London, 1665). The work was partially translated into Dutch (Leiden, 1609; reprinted Leiden, 1638). The best modern edition remains B. Nicholson, ed., *The Discoverie of Witchcraft by Reginald Scott, Esquire Being a Reprint of the First Edition Published in 1584* (London, 1886; reprinted London, 1973). The most readily accessible version of the 1584 text is M. Summers, ed., *The Discoverie of Witchcraft by Reginald Scott* (London, 1930; reprinted Mineola, NY, 1972), which I cite, supplying, for ease in reference, the book and chapter numbers, followed by the page number in Summer's edition. See further, S. Anglo, "Reginald Scott's Discoverie of Witchcraft," in S. Anglo, ed. *The Damned Art* 106-139.

page of the second edition (1651, probably composed by its bookseller, Thomas Williams) than that of the original. To quote only the first few lines: *Scot's Discovery of Witchcraft Proving The common opinions of Witches contracting with Divels, Spirits, or Familiars; and their power to kill, torment, and consume the bodies of men, women, and children, or other creatures by diseases or otherwise; their flying in the air, &c. To be but imaginary Erroneious conceptions and novelties; Wherein Also, The lewde unchristian practises of Witchmongers, upon aged melancholy, ignorant, and superstitious people in extorting confessions, by inhumane terrors and tortures is notably detected ....* But this is not the aspect of the work I should like to review. Scot breaks the connection between heresy, satanism and the like with witchcraft by denying the presence of any doctrine or esoteric system of thought. Witchcraft and magic are entirely reducible to actions, and it is only ignorance of their trickery that leads to the imputation of supernaturalism: "these are not supernaturall actions but the devises of men" (XIII.34, 199). Hence, his favorite vocabulary for describing the activities of witches and magicians are forms of the verb 'cozen,' a verb first attested in English in 1561,[23] only twenty-three years earlier than Scot's work, carrying the sense of 'to cheat,' 'to defraud by deceit.' Thus, towards the end of his work, Scot defines witchcraft as "in truth a cousening art" (XVI.2, 274), a "cunning consist[ting] onlie in deluding and deceiving the people ... By slight and devises; without the assistance of anie divell or spirit, saving the spirit of cousenage" (XVI.3, 275). For the same reason, Scot publishes more spells and magical texts (e.g., XI.15, 116-17; XII.7, 127 - XII.22, 161; XV.4, 226 - XV.20, 251) than most of his contemporaries in witchcraft studies.[24] Words are of interest to Scot only if thoroughly embedded in actions (e.g., XIII.26, 187). By the same token, for Scot, an exposure of the mechanisms, of the slight-of-hand involved in magical deeds is, at the same time a demonstration of their theological innocence. Indeed, by his account, if anyone be guilty of heresy, it is most likely the accusers of witches who thereby deny that God and Christ alone are the authors of miraculous deeds. "God onlie worketh great

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[23] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. 'cozen,' see further, 'cosenage,' 'cozening.' The *OED* does not cite Scot for any of its examples of this word-family.

[24] I have not been able to obtain a copy of Isaac Rabboteau (pseudonym for Philip van Marnix), *The Bee Hive of the Romische Churche, Wherein the Author, a zealous Protestant, under the person of a superstitious Papist, doth so driely retell the gross opinions of Popery* ... (London, 1579), in its 2nd ed., edited by Abraham Fleming (London, 1580) which Scot appears to use as a source for many of these texts. See the marginal note on p. 131, and see further the persistent maginal notes accompanying many spells, "Englished by Abraham Fleming."

wonders" (I.1, 2); the accusers "flie from trusting in God to trusting in witches" (I.5, 7).

Scot begins with witchcraft accusations, noting that "some other things might naturallie be the occasion and cause of such calamities as witches are supposed to bring" (I.6, 8; cf. II.10,19). Real poisons (or "meere poisons" [VI.6, 69]) may account for illnesses of deaths "commonlie attributed to witches charms" (VI.4, 68). The physiological effects resulting from intercourse with Incubi may, in fact, be "naturall" or "bodilie" disease (IV.11, 49). While witches are accused of casting spells to prevent butter being churned, Scot knows, from actual experiments, that if one puts a little soap or sugar in the churn, it will never produce butter (I.4, 6).

However, he clearly is more interested in actual trickery. In the case of an accused witch in Westwell, "the fraud was found," "the illusion manifestlie disclosed," to wit, "all hir diabolicall speech was but ventriloquie and plaine cousenage" (VII.2, 74). Ventriloquism may likewise account for Samuel's appearance in the biblical witch of Endor narrative (VII.13, 84), in the same way as Boniface VIII "cousened" the papacy from Celestine V, having "counterfetted a voice through a cane as though it had come from heaven" (XV.40, 270).

Similarly, he spends considerable time exposing the sleight-of-hand trickery in "naturall magicke" (esp. XIII.12, 174) and "alcumysterie" (XIV.1, 204 - XIV.7, 214). But the heart of his work is a "tract of the art of juggling," an eighteen page treatise, with illustrations, on magic in all its senses ranging from parlor tricks with balls and coins to the apparatus employed to produce grand illusions such as heads being cut off (XIII.21, 181 - XIII.34, 199). In each case it is a device, a mechanism, a skill, a manual activity, a "nimble conveiance of the hand" (XIII.22, 182)—léger de main, presti-digitation, in the strict sense of those terms—that accomplishes the 'wonder,' while, from the perspective of the duped viewers, the magicians "with words seeme to doo the fact" (XIII.26, 187). One of his simplest examples will suffice:

> To make a little ball swell in your hand till it be verie great: Take a verie great ball in your left hand or three different big balles, and shewing one or three little balles, seeme to put them into your left hand, concealing (as you may well doo) the other balles which were there in before; *then use words*, and make then seeme to swell, and open your hand, &c. (XIII.23, 183, emphasis added)

While Scot's work bears some resemblance to near contemporary treatments of 'natural magic,' with their emphasis on natural forces rather than rituals and secret verbal formulae responsible for their

results as well as their interest in tricks and illusions,[25] the latter becoming the topic of a distinct genre of exposure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[26] Scot's project, in fact, belongs to an ancient

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[25] For medieval examples of 'how to' manuals, see the manuscripts described in R. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1989) 90-94, and B. Ray, "The Household Encyclopedia as Magic Kit: Medieval Popular Interest in Pranks and Illusions," *Journal of Popular Culture* 14 (1980) 60-69. For the medieval literature of exposure, see Roger Bacon, *De mirabili potestate artis et naturae* (ca. 1260), first published, in Latin, in 1542, and first translated into English in 1659, *Friar Bacon, his Discovery of the Miracles of Art, Nature and Magick, Faithfully translated out of Dr. Dee's own Copy, by T. M.* (London, 1659); see now, the edition in J. S. Brewer, ed., *Fr. Rogeri Bacon Opera quaedam hactenus inedita* (London, 1859) 1:523-51, and T. L. Davis, translator, *Roger Bacon's Letter Concerning the Marvelous Power of Art and of Nature and Concerning the Nullity of Magic* (Easton, PA., 1923). For the Renaissance literature of exposure, see, for example, the works of Giovanni Battista della Porta, most especially his *Magiae Naturalis, sive de miraculis rerum naturalum libri III* (Naples, 1558), expanded and expurgated in a second edition, *Magiae Naturalis ... Libri viginti* (Naples, 1589), the latter translated into English, *Natural Magick* (London, 1658; reprinted New York, 1957) a work that appeared in more than twenty Latin printings, and was translated, as well, into Italian, French, German and Dutch. While the work largely insists on natural causes (laws of sympathy and the like) as the true reasons for apparently wondrous effects, rather than spells, incantations and theories of demonic influence, it is likewise (especially in Book II) concerned with the means of producing a long list of tricks and illusions. See especially, W. Eamon, *Science and the Secrets of Nature: Books of Secrets in Medieval and Early Modern Culture* (Princeton, 1994) 196-233, esp. 206-207, 226-27. Note should be taken of Gaspar Schott's two works *Jocoseriorum maturae et artis; sive Magiae naturalis canturiae tres* and *Magia optica* (see the literature cited above, note 14).

[26] With predecessors, for example. S. R. [Samuel Rid?], *The Art of Jugling, or Legerdemain* (London, 1614); anon., *Hocus Pocus Junior, The Anatomy of Legerdemaine* (2nd ed., London, 1654), with at least 14 subsequent editions, being then revised by Henry Dean, *The Whole Art of Legerdemain, or, Hocus Pocus in Perfection* (London, 1722), with at least 16 editions, the best known eighteenth and nineteenth century works include: H. Decremps, *La Magie blanche dévoilée* (Paris, 1784), expanded to three volumes in the 3rd ed. (Paris and Liege, 1789); J. N. Ponsin, *La Sorcellerie ancienne et moderne expliquée, ou cours complet de prestidigitation* (Paris, 1853); J. E. Robert-Houdin, *Secrets de la prestidigitation et de la magie* (Paris, 1868; English translation, *The Secrets of Conjuring and Magic, or How to Become a Wizard* [London, 1877]). See, as well, the articles "Legerdemain" and "Magic, White" in the 9th ed. of *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1875-89), combined and expanded in a single article, "Conjuring" in the 11th ed. (1910-11); K. Volkmann. *The Oldest Deception: Cups and Balls in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (Minneapolis, 1956); as well as the standard bibliographies: K. Volkmann, *Bibliographie de la prestidigitation* (Brussels, 1952-) vols. 1-; T. H. Hall, *A Bibliography of Books on Conjuring in English from 1580 to 1850* (Lepton, 1957); E. G. Heyl, *A Contribution to Conjuring Bibliography in the English Language* (Baltimore, 1963); T. H. Hall, *Some Printers and Publishers of Conjuring Books and Other Ephemera, 1800-1850* (Leeds, 1976); R. Toole-Scott, *A Bibliography of English Conjuring 1581-1876* (Darby, 1976); R. Gill, *Magic as a Performing Art: A Bibliography of Conjuring* (New York, 1976).

tradition of interpretation, familiar, as well, to present-day students of religion; that which unmasks the 'fake' in fakir, or, to misuse a false friend, the 'sham' in shamanism. It is the sort of approach made famous by Lucian's *Alexander*, by the fourth book of Hippolytus's *Refutations* (and, for that matter, with attendant legal implications in Livy's account of the charges against the Dionysiacs in *Histories* 39.13). It is of a piece with that long list of scholarly conundrums surrounding "talking, weeping and bleeding statues,"[27] the "Indian rope trick,"[28] "fire-walking,"[29] and the palming of objects as well as other trickeries in northern shamanic practices.[30] Stripped down to technique, a focus on magical action yields little interesting theory beyond claims of fraud and deceit, and reflections on the ubiquity of human gullibility.

The final Scot(t) to be reviewed is our near contemporary, Walter Scott (1855-1925), editor and translator of the *Corpus Hermeticum*.[31] I should note that he remains more biographically mysterious than the other two Scot(t)s, he is not memorialized in any of the standard reference works, even though Shambala Press, no doubt by means of occult researchers, has resolved the question on the covers of volume one of its 1993 reprint: the front reads, "edited and translated by Sir Walter Scott;" the back announces, "Sir Walter Scott, 1771-1832, the well-known author of such novels as Ivanhoe and the Bride of Lammermoor, devoted much of his life to the study of the Hermetica."[32] Our Scott's labor have been both acknowledged and

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[27] F. Poulsen, "Talking, Weeping and Bleeding Statues," *Acta Archaeologica* 16 (1945) 178-95; E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1951, reprinted Boston, 1957) 292-95; Christopher A. Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses: Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual* (Oxford, 1992).

[28] M. Eliade, "Remarques sur le 'rope trick,'" in S. Diamond, ed., *Culture in History: Essays in Honor of Paul Radin* (New York, 1960) 541-51, cf. Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (New York, 1958) 321-23, 423-24 (note VIII.5, with bibliography); Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (New York, 1964) 428-31.

[29] H. Price, *A Report on Two Experimental Fire-Walks* (London, 1936), with rich bibliography to which should be added E. Sarankov, *Feuergehen* (Stuttgart, 1980).

[30] Eliade, *Shamanism* 255, n. 120. For the same issue beyond the circumpolar region, see, among others, C. Lévi-Strauss, "The Sorcerer and His Magic," in Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (New York, 1963) 1:167-85; A. P. Elkin, *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*, 2nd ed. (St. Lucia, Queensland, 1977) 7-8, et passim.

[31] W. Scott, *Hermetica: The Ancient Greek and Latin Writings Which Contain Religious or Philosophic Teachings Ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus* (Oxford, 1924-36; reprinted London, 1968) vols. 1-4 (vol. 4 was posthumously completed by A. S. Ferguson, pp. ix-xlix and 353-576).

[32] I am grateful for the keen eyes of Jason B. Smith who brought this gaffe to my attention. The attribution is corrected in volumes 2-4 of the reprint.

severely criticized since Reitzenstein's famous review of 1925.[33] Scott allows us to begin to see the consequences for scholarship of choosing one or another of the dualist positions already rehearsed. He brings the matter under discussion down to modern times; indeed he raises it in the first two paragraphs of the first volume of the work:

> The Hermetica dealt with in this book may be described as 'those Greek and Latin writings which contain religious or philosophic teachings ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus.' It does not much matter whether we say 'religious' or 'philosophic' .... There is, besides these, another class of documents, the contents of which are ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus; namely, writings concerning astrology, magic, alchemy, and kindred forms of pseudo-science. [These things might be grouped together under the vague but convenient term 'occult arts and sciences.'] But in the character of their contents these latter differ fundamentally from the former ....[T]hey were of a very different mental calibre; and it is in most cases easy to decide at a glance whether a given document is to be assigned to the one class or to the other. We are therefore justified in treating the 'religious' or 'philosophic' Hermetica as a class apart, and, for our present purpose, ignoring the masses of rubbish which fall under the other head. (1:1 and n. 2)

Thus, the authors of the Corpus Hermetica were "men who had received some instruction in Greek philosophy ... And sought to build up, on a basis of Platonic doctrine, a philosophic religion that would better satisfy their needs" (1:1-2), a Platonic doctrine "modified, in various degrees, by the infusion of a Stoic ingredient" (1:9). One of the two most noteworthy features of the collection, taken as a whole:

> is the absence of *theurgia*—that is, of ritualism, or sacramentalism. The notion of the efficacy of sacramental rites, which filled so large a place both in the religion of the Christians and in that of the adherents of the Pagan mystery-cults, is (with quite insignificant exceptions) absent throughout these Hermetica. (1:8; cf. 4:74).

And again:

> the votaries of these [mystery] cults stood, for the most part, on a far lower intellectual level than the Hermetists, and their devotion to the

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[33] The review by Reitzenstein appeared in *Gnomon* 1 (1925) 249-53. Cf. R. Reitzenstein and H. H. Schaeder, *Studien zum antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland* (Leipzig, 1926) 154. B. F. Copenhaver, *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a new English translation* (Cambridge, 1992) liii, after rehearsing these items, is blunt: "Scott's translation can only be regarded as a translation of Scott, not of the Hermetic authors." I should add that a detailed study of the totality of Scott's editorial activities with respect to the Corpus and the patterns into which they fall, has, to my knowledge, yet to be undertaken.

> gods they worshipped was inextricably intermixed with sacramental rites and quasi-magical operations from which the Hermetic teachers held aloof. (1:11)

For this reason, in his review of previous scholarship, C. F. G. Heinrici's work (posthumously edited by E. Von Dobschutz), *Die Hermes-Mystic und das Neue Testament* (Leipzig, 1918) comes under particular attack for its employment of the category 'mysticism.' If the term means "aspiration towards union with God, there is much in our Hermetica; but of the sacramentalism of the Pagan mystery-cults, and of *theurgia* in general, there is hardly anything." These two are illegitimately combined by Heinrici under the vague designation "*Mystik*," ignoring that the two "have in reality little or nothing in common" (1:48). One might observe that Scott likewise combines a variety of phenomena under the single term *theurgia*. We have already encountered as synonymous: "astrology, magic, alchemy," "pseudo-science," "occult arts and science," "ritualism," "sacramentalism," and "quasi-magical operations." In his longest discussion of theurgy, in the notes to Iamblichus, *Abammonis ad Porphyrium Responsum*, he writes of "theurgic or sacramental rites" (4.72, 87, 95), "sacramental initiations" (4:79), "[theurgic] rites of initiation" (4:87, 88, 92-93).

The phenomenon Scott points to, the lack of explicit magical materials in the collected tractates is, of course, correct, although it is a misleading observation when he extends the category to include all "ritualistic" or "sacramental" references. His explanation is inadequate, more representative of one sort of classicist's disdain than of any thought out interpretative position. Theurgy, in Scott's sense of the term, is simply not 'classy.' Therefore it can be categorized as "rubbish" produced by individuals of a "far lower intellectual calibre." Where he does recognize ritual interest is largely in the Latin *Asclepius*, a text Scott understands as being, in parts, more influenced by Egyptian thought than by Greek (3:1-300, esp. 3:52, 112-15, 154-66, 274), a position made complicated by his involved redactional hypotheses and his notion that, in sections, "we have to deal with a text which has been cut to pieces and shuffled like a deck of cards" (3:103).

The consequences of Scott's rejection of ritual action (i.e., in his term theurgia) are severe. For example, for him, the word, 'mysteries,' "contains no suggestion that a theurgic or sacramental operation is about to take place; it merely signifies a doctrine which is holy, and has hitherto been known to a few. The word itself does not necessarily imply that the hearer is under any obligation to keep the doctrine secret from others" (3:103). Thus, it is not surprising that he insists, in

his interpretation of Tractate XIII, that 'rebirth' is to be understood as a "metaphor or figure" (2:373) which was probably borrowed:

> the Platonists in general were not accustomed to employ the metaphor of 'rebirth' .... The group of Hermetists to which the author of Corp. XIII belonged probably got this conception either from the Christians, who held that men are reborn by the sacrament of baptism, or from some Pagan mystery-cult in which men were held to be reborn by a sacramental operation. But the author of Corp. XIII rejects all theurgia, as did the Hermetists in general; and, accordingly, while adopting the notion of rebirth, he differs both from the Christians and from the adherents of those Pagan mystery-cults in which a rebirth was spoken of, in that he does not regard *palingenesia* as effected by any sacramental action. (2:374) In this dialogue, as in the Hermetica in general, there is no trace of any sacramental action .... (2:387)

While he does invite the reader of XIII, once, to "compare" a phrase in *PGM*, no consequences result from this comparison (2:395), nor is there any "need to infer" in another passage "that the writer [of XIII] adhered to the old Egyptian belief in the magical or sacramental efficacy of verbal formulae" (2:406; cf. 3:52).

Similarly, it is not at all surprising to find in Scott's edited Greek text that he brackets, without comment, the word 'magic' in the combination "philosophy and magic" in *Stobaei Hermetica* fragment 23 (1:495; 3:556-57), which signifies that the word occurs in the manuscripts and their presumed archetype, but one which, in Scott's opinion, was "either certainly or probably not present in the text as written by the author" (1:24). The combination, "philosophy and magic," in *SH* 23, is a central text in the arguments of scholars such as G. Fowden who seek a more holistic understanding of the Hermetic tradition as combining both technical and philosophical enterprises, attributing the excision of technical material from the philosophical Hermetica to "Byzantine [Christian] bowdlerizing." Fowden asserts that "there could be nothing more characteristically late antique than this idea of philosophy and magic [in *SH* 23] as nourishers of the soul."[34]

Finally, given Scott's view of "the gibberish of the magical papyri" (3:52), it is predictable that, unlike much contemporary scholarship, he would but rarely cite materials from *PGM*. While the index is neither exhaustive nor accurate, it correctly lists eleven occasions on which Scott turns to the magical papyri. Five of these are exclusively philological (2:41, 92; 3:188-89, 378; 4:74); one notes hymnic syllabic and accentual parallels (2:415); three indicate parallels of thought

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[34] G. Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Cambridge, 1986; reprinted Princeton, 1993) 117-18.

without drawing any interpretative conclusions (2:322; 3:501-502, 550). His only sustained interest in magical texts is his meticulous comparison of *PGM* 3:591-609 to *Asclepius* 41 (1:374-76; 3:384-309)—recalling that he did not have available to him Nag Hammadi Codex VI.7, 63-65. Scott finds the magical text a later "inaccurate transcript" of the hermetic hymn, explaining that the "sorcerers," his persistent term for the writers of magical texts (cf. 2:415),

> were accustomed to make up their incantations partly out of passages extracted from books of religious rituals, or other religious writings, with little regard for the meaning of these passages in their original context (3:284). The object at which the sorcerers aimed in composing their invocations was not to transmit a correct text of any such hymn or prayer, but merely to produce something that would sound impressive to their customers, who must have been mostly ignorant or stupid people. As long as that purpose was served, it mattered little to them whether the words which they wrote down meant this or that, or had no meaning at all. They were perfectly free to alter, to omit, to add things out of their own heads and to patch together scraps taken from different sources; and they did so without scruple. This ought to be borne in mind in dealing with such documents as the Mithraic *Apathanatismos* (Dieterich's *Mithrasliturgie*), for example (3:284 n. 3).

Great Scott!

I have used the first two Scot[t]s to illustrate the most general consequences of a decision to treat magical phenomena as preeminently a matter of either thought or action, the former demanding an explanation, the latter inviting unmasking. The Scott of the Hermetica allows us to record some accounting of the costs of such a decision in a work of professional scholarship which, in this case, having chosen thought and belief, entails the deletion of words and the reorganization of the received Greek and Latin texts in order to expunge or obscure any reference to magical activities, the interpretative consequences for the understanding of particular passages of denying all actual ritual elements, the limitation of the sorts of comparative materials that might be deployed, as well as the overall failure to address adequately the significant question of the familial relationships of the *Corpus* to the wider range of Hermetic literatures and traditions which has engaged modern scholars from Reizenstein through Festugière to Jean-Pierre Mahé and G. Fowden and has resulted in interesting and diverse proposals which have served as fruitful stimuli to further research.

The issue we have been contemplating under the trope of Scot[t] is, of course, endemic as an etic distinction in the study of religions of Late Antiquity whether it be denominated under the dual terminol-

ogy, employed for the Hermetica of 'philosophical-religious' in opposition to the 'occult' or 'theurgic' (Scott), the 'philosophical' and the 'technical' (Fowden) or the 'learned' and the 'popular" (Festugière), or as expressed in the wholesale distinctions, characteristic of Protestant polemic scholarship, between the 'mysteries' and 'primitive' Christianities which were reviewed in *Drudgery Divine*.[35] It also appears as an emic distinction in some sorts of Late Antique texts, such as that between 'philosophy' and the 'priestly arts' (Olympiodorus), between 'theology' and 'theurgy' (attributed to Julian the Theurgist), or between 'theoretical philosophy' and 'theurgy' (Iamblichus).[36]

The same sorts of distinctions prevail in other areas of the study of religion, most especially in cognate fields such as Late Roman philosophical schools, Renaissance Hermeticism and contemporary occult movements. For example, since the early fourteenth century, some circles of Jewish mysticism maintain the emic distinction between 'speculative' or 'theoretical kabbalah' (*kabbalah iyyunit*) and 'practical kabbalah' (*kabbalah ma'asit*), the latter counterdistinguished from modes of forbidden 'wisdom' (*hokhmah hizonah*; *hokhmah benei kedem*) i.e., from 'magic' (*kishuf*). The history of scholarship in this area provides a cautionary tale of the capacity for the etic replication of these divisions through a series of descending bifurcations. To briefly allude to what it is, in fact, a more complex narrative, Gershom Scholem quite rightly insisted on the systemic coherence of what he termed 'Jewish mysticism' over against the rationalist critiques and dismissals of the same phenomena characteristic of nineteenth century Jewish historiography. Although not entirely neglected, the action elements

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[35] Scott, *Hermetica* 1:1, et passim; Fowden, *Egyptian Hermes* 1-11, 116-20, et passim; A. J. Festugière, *Hermétisme et mystique paienne* (Paris, 1967) 39, et passim.

[36] Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Phaedonem commentaria*, W. Norvin, ed. (Leipzig, 1913) 123, 4-7. On Julian's distinction, see J. Bidez, *La Vie de l'empereur Julien* (Paris, 1930) 369 n. 8. Iamblichus, *De mysteriis*, II.ii, E. Des Places, ed. (Paris, 1966) 96-97. On the latter two distinctions, see the helpful discussion by Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* 283-311; F. W. Cremer, *Die Chaldaischen Orakel und Jamblich de mysteriis* (Meisenheim an Glan, 1969) 19-36; H. Lewy, *Chaldean Oracles and Theurgy* 2nd edition (Paris, 1978) 461-66; and G. Luck, "Theurgy and Forms of Worship in Neoplatonism," in J. Neusner, E. S. Frerichs and P. V. McC. Flesher, *Religion, Science and Magic in Concert and in Conflict* (New York and Oxford, 1989) 185-225, esp. 186-87. On the issue of early Christianities and the mysteries, see J. Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine* (Chicago, 1990); see further the important argument of K. Thomas, "An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 6 (1975) 96, that the "reclassification ... Whereby those elements in religion which ultimately came to be regarded as magical" was the product of 16th century Protestant polemics against Catholicism. (Cited in H. Penner, "Rationality, Ritual and Science," in Neusner, Frerichs and Flesher, *Religion, Science and Magic* 12.

of religious praxis were subordinated by Scholem to a richly elaborated hermeneutic of beliefs and symbols. Moshe Idel is, perhaps, the most prominent member of the next generation of scholars who have worked to correct Scholem's emphases at precisely this point. (I can think of no better illustration of the distance between Scholem's and Idel's approach than to compare their respective treatments of the figure of the Golem).[37] Yet, Idel reifies the same sorts of divisions. In 1988, the distinction was between "theosophical-theurgic" or "Sefirotic kabbalah" and "ecstatic kabbalah." In 1990, it was the duality between "elite magic" and "popular magic," the former subdivided into "Spanish" and "Italian kabbalah," with each reflecting a different theory of magic. In his most sustained meditation on the theme, in 1995, he returned to the distinction "theosophical-theurgic" and "ecstatic," now adding a third category, counter-distinguished from the first two, that of the "talismanicmagical."[38] In each of these successive pairs, the first term is oriented towards belief and thought; the second, to action and ritual.

The issues as to thought and action with respect to magic raised by the various scholars we have reviewed are surely not resolvable at the level of data—all have more than enough. They also entail more than the well-known problems attendant on the definition of 'magic.'[39] The relationship of thought and action can only be confronted at the level of theory, in which the understanding of magic is a derivative of a larger set of issues, especially those implicated in the construction of an adequate theory of ritual.

Catherine Bell begins her important study, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (1992) by noting the persistent duality:

> Theoretical descriptions of ritual generally regard it as action and thus automatically distinguish it from the conceptual aspects of religion, such as beliefs, symbols, and myths. In some cases added qualifications may soften the distinction, but rarely do such descriptions question this immediate differentiation or the usefulness of distinguishing what is thought

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[37] G. Scholem, "The Idea of the Golem," in Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (London, 1965) 158-204; Scholem, "The Golem of Prague and the Golem of Rehovot," in Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (New York, 1971) 335-40. M. Idel, *Golem: Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid* (Albany, 1990).

[38] M. Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia* (Albany, 1988) 7-9, et passim; Idel, "Jewish Magic from the Renaissance Period to Early Hasidism," in Neusner, Frerichs and Flesher, *Religion, Science and Magic* (1989) 82-117, esp. 82, 86-90; Idel, *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic* (Albany, 1995) 29, 31, 49, 53, 65, et passim.

[39] See the review of the definitional issues in J. A. Smith, "Trading Places," in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki, eds., *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden, 1995) 13-20.

> from what is done .... Just as the differentiation of ritual and belief in terms of thought and action is usually taken for granted so too is the priority this differentiation accords to thought.[40]

I suspect that the adoption of speech-act theory, and, most especially, the categories of "performative utterances" and "illocutionary force" by so many students of both ritual and magic is one attempt to overcome this duality,[41] although I am not at all certain but that the generating distinction between constatives and performatives is not a reinscription of the same duality.

For myself, recognizing at the outset its genealogy from Tylor and Frazer, but recognizing as well that Frazer's categories of "homeopathic" and "contagious magic" have been satisfyingly described, by Roman Jakobson, as a general theory of cognition and language, under the rubrics of "metaphor" and "metonymy." I continue to find interesting revisionary understandings of what has been termed, since Evans-Pritchard, the "intellectualist interpretation of magic," in which thought is placed on both sides of the putative dichotomy.[42] That is to say, I have been concerned with the intellectual dimensions of ritual, primarily in terms of structures of placement and difference, and processes of transposition. The capacity to alter common denotations in order to enlarge potential connotations within the boundaries of ritual is one of the features that marks off its space as 'sacred.' Transposition is a paradigmatic process set within the largely syntagmatic series of actions which characterize ritual. The respects in which a "this" might, under some circumstances, and only within the confines of ritual space, be a "that" give rise to thought which plays across the gap of like and unlike. Here it is "this," there it is "that." Seen from this perpsective, ritual transposition is a primary mode of thoughtfully exploring the systematics of difference. The most famous ethnographic example of transposition is surely the Nuer sacrifice as reported by Evans-Pritchard:

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[40] C. Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practices* (New York and Oxford, 1992) 19.

[41] Smith, "Trading Places" 15.

[42] J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (London, 1911-16) 1:52; R. Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphastic Disturbances," in R. Jakobson and M. Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (The Hague, 1956) 53-82; E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "The Intellectualist (British) Interpretation of Magic," *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts*, 1 (Egyptian University; Cairo, 1933) 282-311. For revisionary intellectualist positions, see, among others, J. Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Towards Theory in Ritual* (Chicago, 1987); J. Skorupski, *Symbol and Theory: A Philosophical Study of Theories of Religion in Social Anthropology* (Cambridge, 1976), and the critical appreciation of Skorupski in E. Th. Lawson and R. N. McCauley, *Rethinking Religion: Connecting Cognition and Culture* (Cambridge, 1990) 33-37.

> When a cucumber is used as a sacrificial victim, Nuer speak of it as an ox .... In speaking of a particular cucumber as an ox in a sacrificial situation they are only indicating that it may be thought of as an ox in that particular situation; and they act accordingly .... The resemblance is conceptual not perceptual.[43]

Turning to the magical data in *PGM*, I call attention to the ritual transpositional formula, "You are *X*, you are not *X* but *Y*." as in: "You are wine, you are not wine but the head of Athena. You are wine, you are not wine, but the guts of Osiris, the guts of IAO" (*PGM* VII.644-46); "You are the olive oil, you are not the olive oil, but the sweat of Good Daimon, the mucus of Isis, the utterance of Helios, the power of Osiris, the favor of the gods" (*PGM* LXI.7-9).[44]

My aim is not so much to convert my readers to such a position as to persuade you that the question of the duality thought/action is urgent and that, therefore, some theoretical resolution is required, along with its concomitant costs and entailments, even if, with respect to any particular theoretical proposal, you avail yourselves of that third possible verdict, unique to Scottish criminal law, neither a positive nor a negative outcome, but rather a judgement of "not proven."

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[43] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Nuer Religion* (Oxford, 1956) 128.

[44] By way of contrast, compare an example of an identification formula in the narrative-mythic and transformative mode, negotiating, in this case, the difference between "then" and "now." "Take myrrh, chant [the following] and anoint your face: 'You are the myrrh with which Isis anointed herself when she went to the bosom of Osiris, her husband and brother, and you gave charm to her that day. [Now] give ... me ....'" in R. W. Daniel and F. Maltomini, eds., *Supplementum Magicum* (Opladen, 1990-1992) 72, iii.4-80.

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THEORIES OF MAGIC IN ANTIQUITY

Fritz Graf

"The practice of magic was ubiquitous in Antiquity; theorising about it was rare." Thus concluded the church historian Robert Markus in a paper devoted to Augustine's "neglected semiotic theory of magic," in which he also sketched Greco-Roman theories about magic prior to Augustine. In what follows, I intend to take up Markus' point of departure and show that there were several different pre-Augustinian theories of magic already present in Greek and Roman thinking. There were more ancient theories of magic than those which Markus took into account, and Augustine's own theory was not as neglected as Markus supposes.[1]

I

The enquiry best begins with Apuleius who, in his *Apology*, gives no less than three definitions of what is a *magus*: First, he is a priest in the language of the Persians, secondly, he is a specialist involved in the education of a Persian prince to whom he teaches the correct ways of cult and of royal behavior (for which Apuleius cites Plato as his source[2]); and, finally, in what Apuleius calls the vulgar definition (*more vulgari*), "a magus is someone who, through the community of speech with the immortal gods, possesses an incredible power of spells for everything he wishes to do."[3] While the first two definitions are virtu-

[1] Robert A. Markus, "Augustine on Magic. A Neglected Semiotic Theory", *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 40 (1994) 375-388 again in: id. *Signs and Meanings. Word and Text in Ancient Christianity* (Liverpool 1996) 125-146; for a thorough account of Augustine's theory prior to Markus, see Christoph Daxelmüller, *Zauberpraktiken. Eine Ideengeschichte der Magie*, (Zürich 1992) 82-92; for some of the theoretical issues, see also Alan F. Segal, "Hellenistic Magic. Some Questions of Definition", in R. van den Broek and M. J. Vermaseren, eds., *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religion Presented to Gilles Quispel* (EPRO 91; Leiden 1981) 349-375.

[2] Apuleius, *Apology*, 25,10 si quidem magia id est quod Plato interpretatur, cum commemorat quibusnam disciplinis puerum regno adulescentem Persae imbuant. Apuleius then cites Plato, *Alc.* 122Ef., cf. esp. 123A ὁ μὲν μαγείαν δὲ διδάσκει τὴν Ζοροάστρου τοῦ Ὡρομάσδου. ἔστι δὲ τοῦτου θεῶν θεραπεία, διδάσκει δὲ καὶ τὰ βασιλικά (cf. Hunnink 2, 88).

[3] Apul. *Apol.* 26,6 sin vero more vulgari eum isti proprie magum existimant, qui communione loquendi cum deis immortalibus ad omnia, quae velit, incredibli quadam vi cantaminum polleat.

ally identical and have been introduced by Apuleius in order to ennoble and thus neutralize the charge of *magia*, of which he had been accused, at least these definitions show how easily in antiquity our modern categories of religion and magic are collapsed. The third definition deserves more attention since it is similar to a theory of how magic works. The basis of magic is the community of speech between human and superhuman beings, "immortal gods", and its specific agents are the spells, *cantamina*. Again, there does not seem to be an indication of exactly what makes magic work as magic, since community of speech between humans and gods is also indispensable for the function of prayer. The only specificity lies in the words, *cantamina* instead of *preces*, and the designation of an incredible power, *vis incredibilis*.

But Apuleius is not really interested in this definition—or he is interested only insofar as it shows the inconsistencies in the behavior of his opponents, who accuse him of that which they should be afraid: a single spell of Apuleius could stop the entire trial. Somewhat later, though, he comes back to a variation of this same definition, relying again on the opinion of the many, the laymen (*imperiti*), in their misrepresentation of philosophers: they distinguish between the philosophers who are irreligious and interested only in natural causes (like Anaxagoras or the atomists), and those who are overly interested in the workings of divine providence, those whom the people perceive as *magi*, sorcerers (like Orpheus, Pythagoras or Empedocles[4]). What constitutes a magician, again, is his unusual closeness to the divine sphere. This definition reflects current Greco-Roman thinking: magic has its foundation in the possibility of contact between humans and superhuman beings, and its main vehicle is speech, the powerful word (and not ritual, the powerful act). Even Iamblichus, who insists on the importance of theurgic ritual acts, emphasizes the central role of prayer in what he calls "the theurgic communion of the gods with men."[5] Prayer, he says, belongs to any ritual, since prayers "produce an indissoluble and sacred communion with the gods"—they initiate contact with them, bind humans and gods in "concordant communion" (κοινωνία ὁμονοητική), and seal the "ineffable unity" (ἄρρητος ἕνωσις) with them.[6] In short, the speech acts are viewed as the main means for creating the theurgic communion.[7] At the same time,

[4] Ibid. 27,1-3.

[5] Iambl. *myst.* 1,8 (28,6) τῆς θεουργικῆς κοινωνίας θεῶν πρὸς ἀνθρώπους.

[6] Iambl. *myst.* 5,26 passim (English translation by Thomas Taylor).

[7] See also Sarah Iles Johnston, "Rising to the Occasion. Theurgic Ascent in its Cultural Milieu," in Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg, eds., *Envisioning Magic. A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, (Leiden, 1997), 165-194, esp. 185-189 (passwords).

Iamblichus confirms what we considered, in Apuleius, as the only difference between prayers and spells. Since in his system there can be no dichotomy between religion and magic, Iamblichus collapses all differences between the two. The speech acts are prayers, not spells, they are εὐχαί, not *cantamina.*

In his discussion, Apuleius does not follow his own definition but rather the most culturally widespread definition. He focuses on intention: distinguishing between the philosophers, on the one hand, and the professional healers—the doctors and the sorcerers—on the other, he stresses the fact that the healers heal only for monetary gain.[8] This is an entirely different type of theory, but of course it is the only theory which is likely to be effective for Apuleius. He did not invent this theory: the greed of sorcerers and diviners is a stock motif which appears as early as Attic tragedy.[9] Later, Origen gives it an interesting new twist: defending Jesus' miracles against Celsus' comparison of them with the deeds of ordinary sorcerers, Origen focuses on Jesus' intention to better the human race and make people praise God, to which he opposes the egotistic and fundamentally evil ways of the sorcerers (γόητες[10]). Their art relies wholly on the help of pagan evil demons, and the "worship of demons is not our business."[11] This also illustrates how the two theories are not mutually exclusive.

II

So much for Apuleius. The two main theories of magic in antiquity which try to do away with magic altogether and confirm the centrality of the concept of communion between humans and gods as the working basis of magic—are the theory Plato sketches in the *Laws* and the more elaborate and sophisticated theory Augustine presents

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[8] Apul. *Apol.* 40,3 ad quaestum.

[9] E.g. Soph. *OT* 387f.

[10] Origen, *contra Celsum* 1,68 οὐδεὶς μὲν τῶν γοήτων δι' ὧν ποιεῖ ἐπὶ τὴν ἤθων ἐπανόρθωσιν καλεῖ τοὺς θεασαμένους [...], ἐπειδὴ οὐ δύνανται ἢ μηδὲ βούλονται [...] ἅτε καὶ αὐτοὶ πλήρεις ὄντες αἰσχίστων καὶ ἐπιρρητοτάτων ἁμαρημάτων. "None of the sorcerers admonishes his public in what he is performing to better their moral [...]; they cannot do it, nor do they want to [...] since they are full of the most shameful and horrible sins."

[11] Origen, *contra Celsum* 7, 69 δηλοῦται δὲ τὰ περὶ δαίμονας καὶ ἐκ τῶν καλούντων αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τοῖς ὀνομαζομένοις φίλτροις ἢ μισήτροις ἢ ἐπὶ κολύσεσι πράξεων ἢ ἄλλων τοιούτων μυρίων· ἅπερ ποιοῦσι οἱ δι' ἐπωιδῶν καὶ μαγγανειῶν μεμαθηκότες καλεῖν ἐπάγεσθαι δαίμονας ἐφ' ἃ βούλονται· διόπερ ἡ πάντων δαιμόνων θεραπεία ἀλλοτρία ἡμῶν ἐστι, τῶν σεβόντων τὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσι Θεόν, καὶ θεραπεία δαιμόνων ἐστὶ ἡ θεραπεία τῶν νομιζομένων θεῶν.

in his *De doctrina Christiana*. The latter had been the main object of Markus' paper.

In book II of his work, which opens with a long discussion of signs, Augustine addresses pagan superstition, from idolatry via magic to all sorts of divinatory beliefs and practices. All this, he says, "results from the pernicious consociation of men and demons which has been instituted as an untrustworthy and devious friendship."[12] These demons are the followers of the prime fallen angel, the trickster and liar Satan. This association works on the basis "of a language which is common to both humans and demons" and whose signs have been chosen by the demons in order to catch the humans."[13] But the signs of language, Augustine insists, like the signs of the alphabet, are purely conventional, having been agreed upon by the members of a specific language community: "All these signs move the souls according to the conventions of each group, and as the conventions are different, the effects upon the soul are different: people did not agree about the specific meanings of the signs because the signs already had those meanings, but they have the specific meaning because people did agree upon it."[14] Since this is true for every language community, it is valid also for the community which unites men and demons. But this semiotic approach has an important corollary: as soon as one decides to cancel the convention, communication becomes impossible; and since Christians are not supposed to consort with demons (as Paul insisted: 1 Cor 10:20), they no longer share a common language with them. Magic, then, is impossible for a Christian, as is divination and all other rites which rely upon the shared language conventions with the demons. Augustine goes on to show that the model of language is equally valid for gestures, rituals, and images.[15]

This means that Augustine does not radically question the validity and function of magic as based on the commerce with demons. Nor does he question the functioning of divination as being caused by demons, as set out in his highly interesting little piece *Divination through Demons*, which had been triggered by the oracles surrounding the

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[12] Augustine, *doctr.* 2,36 ex quadam pestifera societate hominum et daemonum quasi pacta infidelis et dolosae amicitiae constituta.

[13] Ibid. 2,37.

[14] Ibid., 2,37 ergo hae omnes significationes pro suae cuiusque societatis consensione animos movent et, quia diversa significatio est, diverse movent, nec ideo consenserunt in eas homines quia iam valebant ad significationem, sed ideo valent quia consenserunt in eas.

[15] Ibid., 2,38.

destruction of the Alexandrian Serapeum."[16] Similarly, Paul does not question the validity of sacrifices to pagan gods; but, just as Paul points out that, to a Christian, those gods are actually demons, and forbids Christians to be partners with demons (1 Cor 10:20). Augustine shows how easily a Christian can interrupt any commerce with them by renouncing the common language. This must mean that Augustine speaks of more than just the ordinary language community—magic does not function because humans and demons understand Greek or Latin or Coptic, but because there is a special ritual language whose use is confined to magic, as in Apuleius' "spells of incredible power," and whose efficiency relies mainly of the use of strange words, the *voces magicae*. Augustine does not present an entirely new theory of magic (as Markus implies), but rather applies his new semiotic theory of language to the traditional definition of magic (to cite Apuleius again) as based on *communio loquendi cum dis*.

III

In his *Laws*, Plato too argues against magic. But unlike Augustine, at least at first glance, he does not subsume it under the heading of superstition, but under φαρμακεία, "poisoning." In the loosely structured collection of laws in book XI, when Plato presents his law against φαρμακεία, he differentiates between two forms of the offense, the use of poisonous substances, what we might call physical poisoning, and the use of spells.[17] We might call this latter use psychological poisoning, since magical spells, as Plato understands them, rely on psychological means based on ritual action, on "enchantment and charms and so-called bindings spells,"[18] in order to persuade (πείθειν) or, rather, to frighten: "When they [the victims of magical spells] see waxen figures at their doors, on the crossroads or on the graves of their parents," they are convinced that someone is directing a harmful force against them. As an enlightened philosopher, Plato would prefer to dispell those fears by explaining what magic really is, but (typically for the *Laws*) he has given up the hope that such an act of education would succeed: "Of this and all which is similar to it, it is not easy to know what its nature is, and it is difficult, when one knows it, to convince others [...]. Since the souls of people are full of distrust towards each other in this respect, it is not worthwhile to try to

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[16] Augustine, *De divinatione daemonum*, in: CSEL 41.
[17] Plato, *legg.*, 11,932 Eff.
[18] Ibid., 11.933A μαγγανείαις τισὶν καὶ ἐπωιδαῖς καὶ καταδέσεσι λεγομέναις.

persuade them and [...] to exhort them to neglect these things, given that they don't have a clear idea about them."[19] Magic, then, seems to function only because people can be made to fear it, and they can be frightened because they have no clear knowledge and, even worse, they are full of distrust towards each other. In a friendlier society, where people trust each other, one may suppose, it might be well worth the effort explaining how magic functions, and as a result, magic in such a society would cease to exist altogether.

In the *Laws*, Plato thus refrains from explaining what magic really is. Two additional passages, though, clarify his thinking. He deals with religious laws (book X) and, among other things, with the question of impiety, ἀσέβεια. He distinguishes between two basic types of non-believers. On the one hand, there are the less harmful ones who, although having moral standards, assume that either there are no gods at all, or that they do not care for humans, or that they can be bought by lavish gifts. On the other hand, there are the dangerous non-believers who have no independent moral standards at all and use their erroneous beliefs about the gods for profit: "Those people have become animal-like (θηριώδεις), in addition to not recognizing the existence of gods, or assuming that they would not care for the world or could be bought off. They take everyone for a fool, and many a man they delude during his life: by pretending that, after his death, they could conjure up his spirit, and by promising to influence the gods through the alleged magic powers of sacrifices and prayers and charms (θυσίαις καὶ εὐχαῖς καὶ ἐπωιδαῖς), they try to wreck completely entire homes and states for filthy lucre."[20] Not that they would be able to do what they promise: given the essential goodness of the divine, the gods cannot be misused for those practices—but people, with their muddled ideas about the divine beings, nevertheless believe that they could. The same reasoning appeared already in the *Republic* in the context of a discussion about whether the gods could be influenced by gifts, in the famous passage about the "begging priests and soothsayers," ἀγύρται καὶ μάντεις, who "go to rich men's doors and make them believe (πείθουσι) that by means of sacrifices and incantations they have accumulated a treasure of power from the gods [...] and that, if a man wishes to harm an enemy, at slight cost he will be enabled to injure just and unjust alike, since they are masters of spells and enchantments that constrain the gods to serve their ends.[21]

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[19] Ibid., 933AB ταῦτ' οὖν καὶ περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα σύμπαντα οὔτε ῥάιδιόν ὅπως ποτὲ πέφυκεν γινώσκειν, οὔτ' εἴ τις γνοίη πείθειν εὐπετὲς ἑτέρους.

[20] Plato, *legg.* 10, 909 AB (translation modified after T.J. Saunders, Harmondsworth 1970).

Again, those specialists do not have any real power over the gods and their goodness, but they have the power of persuasion to make their victims believe that they really possess such gifts and powers.

Plato thus is much more radical than Augustine. Magic—which, in his time, means virtually only binding spells, the καταδέσεις mentioned particularly in the *Republic* and the *Laws*—exists and seems to have power over the minds of its victims, but magic does so not because its practitioners are able to manipulate divine powers to their evil ends but because they manipulate human minds by their deceptive rituals and spells. Magic is a psychological and, in the last instance, a social problem, typical for an ailing society; the gods do not enter here. The communication between humans and gods, in whose reality both clients and victims of the sorcerers believe, does not really take place. While Augustine thought that telecommunication between men and gods was, in fact, possible, and so he "cut the cable between the telephones" in order to stop it, Plato considers that sorcerers talk into fake phones. This, of course, makes sense—although for both authors magic is wrong religion, Plato unlike Augustine had only one set of gods to which he could turn.

Augustine, though, uses a second concept as well, one which we might call sociological. In *De doctrina Christiana*, he brings it into his semiotic approach, while in earlier works, especially *De diversis quaestionibus* (whose question 79 deals with the problem why Pharaoh's magicians could have been successful), he made it his main theoretical tool.[22] This theory is based on a highly idiosyncratic distinction between public and private. There are "imaginary signs," he says in *De doctrina Christiana*, which induce people to worship images or other parts of God's creation or to make use of specific cures. But these signs have not been given by God to humankind publicly; humans use them in pursuit of their private interests. That is, there is the sphere of official, public ritual and cult. It is public, as Augustine says, because it is given and validated by God himself, which also means that it is performed in public places and by the entire congregation, i.e. by the entire Christian society, and because there are the Sacred Writings which can be used to control the correctness of the cult. There are also the numerous private rituals which no one can control and which serve individual, private and egotistic goals only: "Every soul is the purer in piety the less it enjoys private things, looks upon the Universal Law and follows this law reverently and voluntar-

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[21] Plato, *Rep.*, 2, 364 BC (translation after Paul Shorey, Loeb edition).
[22] See also *Enarr. in psalm.* 103, 2, 11.

ily; this Universal Law is God's Wisdom."[23] The more one gives in to private motives, the more one becomes the prey of demons: private rituals, for Augustine, are exclusively pagan rituals (theoretically, they could also be heretical rites). Since the basic text, 1 Cor. 10:20, is always present in his mind, these rites are rites addressed to demons—in short, such rites are magical in the larger sense of the word. This opposition between private und public reflects the state of affairs after the abolition of pagan sacrifice and cult through Theodosius II in the 390s. After his edicts, pagan rites survived only in the shadow of private houses, well outside the visibility of Christian zealots.[24] Magic thus is understood as illegitimate and private religion, which is a view that is not Augustine's alone, but is current in the Roman legal tradition. Commenting on Dido's remark in *Aeneid* 4,492f. ("I swear that I took up the craft of magic against my will"[25]), Servius remarked that "the Romans, though accepting many foreign rites, always rejected magic".[26] Augustine knows both the verse and its implications.[27]

IV

The third strand of theory about magic is best exemplified by Plotinus, who treats several loosely connected problems in a treatise entitled *Unsolved Questions of Psychology* (Περὶ ψυχῆς ἀπορίαι; *Enneads* 4,4). Among them is the question whether the heavenly bodies, as animated beings, have a memory. Plotinus tackles the problem by asking himself whether the heavenly bodies, the planetary gods, remember earlier prayers; the mechanism of prayer is central to this part of the discussion (4,4,30-45). But since Plotinus easily glides from prayer, εὐχή, to incantation, γοητεία, magic becomes prominent in the second part of his long discussion (40-45). Plotinus' main thesis is that heavenly bodies do not need a memory, and prayer is answered not because the heavenly bodies remember earlier prayers, but, "because one part is in sympathetic connection with another, just as in

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[23] *De div. quaest.* 79,1 unaquaeque anima tanto est pietate purgatior quanto privato suo minus delectata legem universitatis intuetur eique devote ac libenter obtemperat: est enim lex universitatis divina sapientia.

[24] See also Markus, op. cit. (Note 1) 379 n.17.

[25] Verg. *Aen.* 4, 493f. Testor, cara, deos et te, germana, tuumque / dulce caput, magicas invitam accingere artis.

[26] Servius ad *Aen.* 4, 494 (magicas invitam): ... quia cum multa sacra Romani susciperent, semper magica damnarunt: probrosa enim ars habita est, ideo excusat.

[27] Augustine, *Civ.* 8, 19

one tense string; for if the string is plucked at the lower end, it has a vibration at the upper"[28]—in short, because there is sympathy, συμπαθεία, among the single parts of the cosmos. Plotinus explores this with the help of two images. First, he understands the cosmos as a huge living being. In any living being, input in one place (e.g., the ear) causes a reaction in another, seemingly unrelated place (e.g., a toe), which indicates an invisible force connecting the two; in a similar way, two seemingly unrelated parts of the cosmos are connected by such an invisible force. While this image is rather common and well known, Plotinus uses the more specific image of a group of dancers as well: in such a group, every movement is the movement of an individual and as such subject to the will of this individual, but at the same time it is subject to a wider, all-embracing rule which governs, by an unseen power, those individual movements.[29] Prayer inserts itself into this structure, it is fulfilled by its introduction into this interplay of invisible powers. The stars to which prayers are addressed have neither memory nor intention: "we must admit," says Plotinus, "that some influence comes from them with or without prayer insofar as they are parts, and parts of one whole".[30]

Magical spells, which Plotinus' called "acts of sorcery" (γοητεῖαι), also function through sympathy. A sorcerer (γόης) is someone who has learned to understand and to use the sympathetic powers inherent in the cosmos, turning them against his fellow human beings. These sympathetic and antipathetic forces in the universe are "the primary wizard and enchanter."[31] Neither spell nor prayer needs "a will that grants" (4,4,40): the words attain their goal automatically, as the image of the string exemplifies. This also means that demons, as agents of magic, have no role whatsoever in this system, since magic functions between human souls only; Plotinus explicitly discards such a role for demons.[32] In the closed system of the cosmos, love works as an attraction between two souls, joining "one soul to another, as if they were training together plants set at intervals"; similarly, the sorcerer is able to make use of those forces of attraction in order to make a love charm work.

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[28] Plotinus, *Enneads*, 4, 40, 41 γίνεται τὸ κατὰ τὴν εὐχὴν συμπαθοῦς μέρους μέρει γενομένου, ὥσπερ ἐν μιᾶι νευρᾶι τετεμένηι (translation after A.H. Armstrong, Loeb edition).

[29] Ibid., 4, 4, 33 οἷον μίαν ὄρχησιν ἐν ποικίληι χορείαι ποιούντων.

[30] Ibid., 4, 4, 42.

[31] Ibid., 4, 4, 40 καὶ ὁ γόης ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ φαρμακεὺς οὗτός ἐστι.

[32] See Ibid., 4, 4, 30, where he promises to investigate the role of the demons as well (καὶ περὶ δαιμόνων δὲ ἐπιζητήσει ὁ λόγος), should the problem not already be settled by the inquiry into the celestial bodies, which turns out to be the case.

But Plotinus makes an important distinction. As love is an emotion and thus has nothing to do with the rational soul, charms in general function by influencing the non-rational parts of the soul. In this respect, charms function like music, a "kind of magic which causes no surprise; people even like being enchanted, even if this is not exactly what they demand from the musicians."[33] This also means that even a sage (σπουδαῖος) can be touched by magic in the non-intellectual parts of his soul, although he also is able to counteract a magical attack through his intellectual soul. This explains the stories we hear about neoplatonist philosophers who are able to counteract magical attacks. Plotinus himself, according to Porphyry, counteracted the attacks of a jealous colleague vexing him with stomach-aches,[34] and the philosopher Maximus of Ephesus was able to defend his pupil Sosipatra against an unwanted attack of erotic magic.[35]

This theory has two consequences for our understanding of magic. The predominant one is this: magic relies on forces which are active in the closed system of the cosmos and which create bonds between two different parts of it. In a certain sense, Plotinus insists, magic itself is such a force. If specified, its limitation is that it acts only on the non-intellectual part of the soul. For the rest, nothing in this power *per se* makes it magical or non-magical—Plotinus emphasizes this by calling magical any force which exerts an influence on the non-intellectual part of the soul, especially in the non-philosopher, the person who follows practical pursuits in his life and who, driven by his non-rational soul, is a victim of magic: "In general, to be actively occupied with the semblance of the truth and drawn towards it in any way is characteristic of someone who has been deluded by the forces which draw one to the lower world: this is what the magic of nature does."[36] The only human being who cannot be touched by magic is the absolutely contemplative person, the ideal and perfect philosopher: "Contemplation alone stands untouched by magic."[37] What constitutes

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[33] Ibid., 4, 4, 40 οὐ θαυμάζεται ἡ γοητεία ἡ τοιαύτη· καίτοι φιλοῦσι κηλούμενοι, κἂν μὴ τοῦτο αἰτῶνται παρὰ τῶν τῆι μουσικῆι χρωμένων.

[34] Porphyry, *vita Plotini* 10, 1-9.

[35] Eunapius, *Vitae sophistarum* 410-413; the diagnosis is arrived at through a sacrifice, δὶα σοφίας θυτικῆς.

[36] Plot. *Enn.*, 4, 4, 44 †λως γὰρ ἡ περὶ τὸ ἐοικὸς τῶι ἀληθεῖ πραγματεία καὶ ὁλκὴ εἰς αὐτὸ πᾶσα ἠπατημένου ἐξ ἐκείνων τῶν ἐπ᾽ αὐτὰ ελκόντων· τοῦτο γὰρ ἡ τῆς φύσεως γοητεία ποιεῖ—"For, in general, to be actively occupied with the semblance of truth and drawn towards it in any way is characteristic of someone who has been deluded by the forces which draw one to the lower world: that is what the magic of nature does" (translation by A.H. Armstrong, Loeb edition).

[37] Ibid., 4, 4, 44 (init.) μόνη δὲ λείπεται ἡ θεωρία ἀγοήτευτος εἶναι.

magic as a special field of activity, then, is not the force employed, but only the intention of the person who makes use of this force. To put it slightly differently: when one does away with the demonological superstructure of magic, magic and religion would collapse were it not for the different intentions of the practitioners. To return to my former imagery: in this view, the sorcerer is a specialist who is able "to tap into the phone lines" and use them for his own purpose.

This theory has its consequences for the distinction between prayer and magic. Basically, there should be no difference of form, only of intention. But of course, a different intention of a speech act might result in its different form as well. This seems to happen here: when Plotinus explains the specific force of spells, he says: "There is a natural drawing power in spells wrought by the tune and the particular intonation and posture of the magician [...]; for it is not the power of choice by reason which is charmed, but the irrational soul."[38] The specific intention of the spell, directed not at a superhuman being but at a fellow human being, gives it forms which have power over the victim's soul; these forms concern both the actual spell, which has a specific melodiousness and intonation, and its specific performance ("posture"). For Plotinus, a spell thus has different levels of specificity. This view of a spell has more complexity than in those authors, ancient and modern, who see the only difference in the addition of *voces magicae*.[39]

This passage specifies the way a spell acts upon the human soul, affecting only its non-rational part; Plotinus compares the functioning of the spell with the functioning of music. Thus, his explanation of magic by sympathy turns out to be a development of a psychological theory of magic: the sympathy on which magical acts rely functions only when the results of magic affect the non-logical, "lower" parts of the soul. The only comparable theory we know of is that of Plato; and it can only be Plato on whom Plotinus elaborates, although with the fundamental difference that for Plato magic is a great force of intimidation without a real background, while for Plotinus magic exists as a special cosmic force. In Plato, as in Plotinus, the demonological (or, rather, theological) superstructure is absent altogether, and magic works solely through its influence on the victim's soul. There, according to the *Laws*, it causes fear—and fear, of course, is just another

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[38] Ibid., 4, 4, 40 πέφυκε δὲ κὰ ἐπωιδαῖς τῶι μέλει καὶ τῆι τοιᾶιδε καὶ τῶι σχήματι τοῦ δρῶντος [...], οὐδε γὰρ ἡ προαίρεσις οὐδὲ ὁ λόγος ὑπὸ μουσικῆς θέλγεται, ἀλλ᾽ ἡ ἄλογος ψυχή (translation after A.H. Armstrong, Loeb edition).

[39] E.g., Celsus *ap. Origen. c. Cels.* 6, 39 πρός τοὺς χρωμένους ... μαγείαι τινὶ καὶ καλοῦντας ὀνόματοα βαρβαρικὰ δαιμόνων τινῶν.

emotion which belongs to the non-rational part (the θυμοειδές in Plato's classification) of the soul. In its basic assumptions, this is also valid for Plotinus.

V

The results of this study are also useful for the further history of theorizing on magic. In the Christian monotheist tradition there are only two ways of dealing with magic. One is to assume that the sorcerers make use of negative superhuman beings which coexist with God, those pagan gods who now have been unveiled as evil demons and who either are or are not identical with the fallen angels of Jewish tradition; already in late Hellenistic Judaism, they were thought to have brought magic to their human brides, according to the *Book of Watchers* in the *Apocalypse of Enoch*.[40] This perpetuates the most popular Greco-Roman manner of understanding magic, which we also noticed in Origen and Augustine.

The alternative view, which is represented in the actual Christian spells (which never enlist the help and intercession of demons, but rather of Christ, the Virgin or the Saints), has to rely on the concept of intention in order to distinguish magic and religion. An invocation to the Virgin is religious when made with good intentions, but magical when used with evil intentions. In the later tradition, at least in what has been called the intellectualist theory of magic (the Tylor/Frazer model), intention remains the key concept.[41] Scholars who do not follow Frazer's individualism and intellectualism, like Marcel Mauss, have to fall back on the dichotomy between public and private taken up by Augustine from its Roman legal roots. To this day, in some quarters, especially in the study of the science of antiquity, magic tends to be conceptualized as the idiosyncratic and private rites not controlled by the public "religion."

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[40] For a general account of the tradition, see James C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (Catholic Biblical Quarterly. Monograph Ser. 16; Washington D.C. 1984); idem., *Enoch. A Man for All Generations*, (Columbia, S. C. 1995); for a Greek text, see M. Black (ed.), *Apocalypsis Henochi Graece* (Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece 3; Leiden 1970), chaps. 6f.; the crucial information concerns the fallen angels: φαρμακείας καὶ ἐπωιδάς καὶ ῥιζοτιμίας καὶ τὰς βοτάνας ἐδήλωσαν αὐταῖς.

[41] See Hendrik S. Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion," *Numen* 38 (1991) 177-197 and my *Magic in the Ancient World*, (Cambridge, MA. 1998), chapters 1 and 2

THE POETICS OF THE MAGICAL CHARM
AN ESSAY IN THE POWER OF WORDS*

H.S. Versnel
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An ideo magus, quia poeta?
Apuleius

Such a battery of verbal devices
S.J. Tambiah

I *Introduction*

In his *Naturalis Historia* 28, 10, the learned Roman author Pliny the Elder (23/4-79 AD) discusses the cures (*remedia*) that are based on human authority (i.e. in opposition to the natural power inherent in medicinal plants or herbs) and he raises the important and eternal question whether formulas and incantations have any power at all (*polleantne aliquod verba et incantamenta carminum*).[1] His answer is ambiva-

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* This paper is a revised and updated English version of "Die Poetik der Zaubersprüche", in: T. Schabert & R. Brague (eds.), *Die Macht des Wortes* (Eranos NF 4, Munich 1996) 233-297. My English manuscript was, for that occasion, translated into German, printed and published without the author being allowed to check the results of any of these processes. The deplorable result was that various passages turned out to be incomprehensible due to misinterpretations, misprints or other disasters. I am grateful to the editors of the present volume for granting me the opportunity of publishing a new version of the paper in English and in particular to Paul Mirecki for patiently correcting my English. The paper was intended for a general readership of non-specialists, and I have not changed its original character.

[1] In the survey of the contents which he added to his book, he had promised to focus on the medical application of these *carmina* (for the various Latin terms for 'charm' see: A. Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche in Texten der römischen und frühmittelalterlichen Medizin", in: G. Sabbah [ed.], *Études de médécine romaine* [St. Étienne 1988] 113-56, esp. 137 n.7; cf. A.-M. Tupet, "Rites magiques dans l'antiquité romaine", *ANRW* II.16.3 [1986] 2591-2675), and to inquire "whether in the action of healing there is a certain power in words" (*an sit in medendo verborum aliqua vis*). However, he soon gives up this restriction and sets out to discuss various types of ritual formulas including both ritual prayer and (magical) incantation. On this passage see: Th. Köves-Zulauf, *Reden und Schweigen: römische Religion bei Plinius Maior* (Munich 1972) 24 n.10, and *passim* in his first chapter. In defense of Köves-Zulauf, A. Bäumer, "Die Macht des Wortes in Religion und Magie (Plin. *NH* 28, 4-29)", *Hermes* 112 (1984) 84-99, argues that Pliny in an *implicit* manner betrays more coherence than scholars tend to grant him, and that his true opinion is that indeed words do have power. On the relationship between beneficial and harmful *carmina*, esp. in Pliny, see: A.M. Addabbo, "*Carmen* magico e *carmen* religioso", *Civiltà classica e cristiana* 12 (1991) 11-28; F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge Mass. 1997) 49-56, who notes that Pliny does not call Cato's cure 'magical' as opposed to other artifices collected in book 30, which he does list under the notion magic, being *fraudulentissima artium*: "the most fraudulent of all disciplines".

lent: individually the more educated people reject belief in these practices. On the whole, however, in normal life it pervades everything all the time, though unconsciously (*Sed viritim sapientissimi cuiusque respuit fides, in universum vero omnibus horis credit vita nec sentit*). The ambivalence of this phrase betrays the ambivalence of its author. For on the one hand, time and again he derides these magical formulas as superstitious and ridiculous (*NH* 30, 1ff.; 27, 267: "most people believe that hailstorms can be averted by means of a charm, the words of which I would not for my own part venture seriously to introduce into my book"), on the other hand, throughout his book, he cannot resist mentioning various situations that require the serious and precise application of *precationes*.[2]

If we wish to have an idea what Pliny had in mind when speaking of these "powerful healing words" no example is more illuminative than a famous passage from Cato the Censor, who lived two centuries before Pliny and whose magical charm is also referred to by Pliny.[3] Cato was very good at powerful words, as Carthage was to experience, but he had more strings to his bow. In his almanac for the gentleman farmer *De agri cultura* 160, he explains what to do when a person (or an animal) suffers from a dislocation:

> "Take a green reed four or five feet long and split it down in the middle. And let two men hold it to the hips. Begin to chant: *Moetas vaeta daries dardaries asiadarides una petes* (or: *motas vaeta daries dardares astataries dissunapiter*) until they meet. Brandish an iron knife(?) over them, and when the reeds meet so that one touches the other, grasp with the hand and cut right and left. If the pieces are applied to the dislocation or the fracture, it will heal. And nonetheless chant every day, and in the case of dislocation in this manner, if you wish: *Huat, hauat, huat ista pista sista dannabo dannaustra* (or *huat, haut, haut istasis tarsis ardannabou dannaustra*)."

This is one of the most discussed texts in the field of Roman (magical) cures and incantations.[4] Indeed, the text gives rise to a number of

[2] See for instance his curiously ambivalent phrasing in *NH* 28, 29: "We certainly still have formulas to charm away hail, various diseases, and burns, some actually tested by experience (*quaedam etiam experta*), but I am very shy of quoting them, because of the widely different feelings they arouse (*in tanta animorum varietate*). Wherefore everyone must form his own opinion about them as he pleases." About Pliny's ambivalence see: G. Serbat, "La référence comme indice de distance dans l'énoncé de Pline l'Ancien", *Revue de Philologie* 47 (1973) 38ff.; A. Önnerfors, "Traumerzählung und Traumtheorie beim älteren Plinius", *RhM* 119 (1976) 352 ff.

[3] *NH* 17, 267: *A Catone proditis contra luxata membra iungendae harundinum fissurae*; 28, 21: *Cato prodidit luxatis membris carmen auxiliare.*

[4] Already a good discussion in R.L.M. Heim, "Incantamenta magica graeca latina", *Jahrbuch für Classische Philologie*, Suppl. 19 (1892) 465-575, esp. 533 ff. Further, E. Laughton, "Cato's Charm for Dislocations", *CR* 52 (1938) 52-4; W.B. McDaniel, "A Sempiternal Superstition for Dislocated Joint: A split green reed and a Latin

interesting observations. First of all it is a perfect instance of the twin strategies widely applied in this type of medical magic but also, though less commonly, in other types of magical texts, such as curse texts or *defixiones*. These two strategies consist of *ritual action* on the one hand and *ritual words* on the other. In the present paper I will focus my attention on the ritual words, but it would do no harm constantly to keep in mind that words and deeds are often two complementary and inseparable parts of one ritual process.

With respect to the formulaic aspects, the text of Cato gives rise to several fundamental questions. First of all, there are two different versions of the magical formulas, which in our text are twice introduced by the words: *in alio s. f.*, which means: *in alio codice sic fertur* ("in another manuscript it is thus written..."). We find this phrase already in the oldest known manuscript, now lost but copied in the fifteenth century, which means that its author already found different versions of the two *carmina* in his model. It is very well possible that both versions were already juxtaposed in the archetype, as Wessely[5] suggested.

We are here confronted for the first time with a notorious feature of the (magical) charm: the abundance of variants of one type—parallel but different versions of one model. Instead of taking this symptomatic variation for granted—and hence ignoring it—I will pay ample attention to this phenomenon since in my view it has a certain bearing on the power and efficacy of the terms under discussion. So let us keep this in mind. However, there are other, even more basic questions. The most obvious, also the most controversial, is the following: did these formulas contain any retraceable meaning? From the last century onwards radically opposite answers have been given to this question,[6] which can be roughly classified into three categories.

The first answer is that these words are "purely magical" expressions: sounds without any intrinsic secular, that is 'normal', meaning.

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charm", *CJ* 45 (1950) 171-6. See also the edition of Cato's work by R. Goujard (Paris 1975) 319 f.; A.-M. Tupet, *La magie dans la poésie latine* (Paris 1976) 169f.; Tupet, "Rites magiques", 2596 f.; Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 43-47. In his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom* Richard Gordon has another—and novel—interpretation, explaining the action as a case of tautology and parallelization.

[5] C. Wessely, "Zu Catos Schrift über das Landwesen, cap. CLX", *WS* 20 (1898) 135-140.

[6] I am restricting myself to modern scholarship here. As a matter of fact, however, all the answers mentioned had already been suggested in antiquity, especially in connection with the *Ephesia grammata* to be discussed below. See: K. Preisendanz, "Ephesia Grammata", *RAC* V (1962) 515-20.

The words belong to the so-called *voces magicae*, a term that we shall discuss later. They are of the type of *abracadabra*,[7] an expression which certainly *has* a sense (that is: a function, an objective), but which does not *make* sense: it does not carry a comprehensible, lexical meaning. The other two answers both argue that once upon a time the words must have had a concrete meaning but that this meaning is now hidden to us. For this unfortunate situation two different reasons are proposed. One—and this is the second answer referred to above—is that the magical phrase belongs to a language we do not know or understand anymore. When dealing with the ancient world we need not be surprised that Celtic and Etruscan have both been eagerly put forward as promising candidates. The implication of this option is that we are at a loss: though, originally, the words carried a meaning, this meaning cannot now be traced, since the languages they belonged to are not—or not sufficiently—understood by the modern reader, nor were they by the majority of the ancient Romans.

The third answer also assumes that the formulas once did contain a meaningful message. However, this time the reason why we have not detected this meaning so far is because we have not tried hard enough. The words belong to an archaic or a dialectical form of the Latin language and can be isolated and analysed with the help of, for instance, etymological dictionaries, historical linguistics and a generous dash of ingenuity. In this way Paul Thielscher[8] managed to 'translate' most of the terms and phrases of Cato's charm. Some of them, he argues, were addressed to the displaced bone. *Dissunapiter* is then a corruption of *dis una petes*, which means: "take care that, each from your own side, you will reunite"; *mota sueta* "move yourself to your accustomed place", *daries dardaries*: "give, give yourself" etc. Other scholars had already explained *ista pista sista* as *istam pestem sistat* "stop that pestilence".[9]

I feel no temptation whatsoever to take sides in this endless discussion, but I do wish to take the variety of interpretations as a point of departure or rather as a signpost for my own provisional and tenta-

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[7] On the origin of this most celebrated magical word see: A. Dieterich, *Abraxas. Studien zur Religionsgeschichte des späteren Altertums* (Leipzig 1891); A. Nelson, "Abracadabra", *Eranos* 44 (1946) 326-336; Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 138 n. 12. Its earliest documentation is ca. 200 AD.

[8] P. Thielscher, *Des Marcus Cato Belehrung über die Landwirtschaft* (Berlin 1963) 385-92.

[9] See for instance Tupet, *La magie dans la poésie latine*, 170 ff.; Tupet, "Rites magiques", 2596 ff. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* , warns us not too easily to discard these considerations.

tive explorations into the various types of magical powerful words and more especially into the supposed sources of their power. It will become apparent that the profusion of interpretations concerning the Cato text is in fact characteristic of magical charms in general. Again, I would suggest not to disregard this but rather take it as a serious challenge to inquire if perhaps there is a *meaning* in this poly-interpretability. After all, the following questions force themselves upon us:

1 if, in origin, the formulas had been understandable—and of seminal importance to the magical act—why were they allowed to become incomprehensible in the course of time?
2 if they were derived from foreign languages, what was the reason for borrowing these enigmatic texts at all?
3 if, from the outset, the words lacked a lexical meaning, what was the reason for concocting these meaningless sounds?

In short, I wish to ask the question: what is the meaning of the lack of meaning? What is the sense of nonsense? Whoever might censure this as an anachronistic and modern biased formulation of the problem may be reminded that the third century philosopher Porphyry asked exactly the same question in his attack on the followers of Plotinus, especially Iamblichus, whose practices of *theurgia,* derided as 'magic' (γοήτεια) by Porphyry, made ample use of these *onomata barbara.* Porphyry wondered: "What, after all, is the sense of these meaningless words, and why are the foreign ones preferred to our own?" (τί δὲ καὶ τὰ ἄσημα βούλεται ὀνόματα, καὶ τῶν ἀσήμων τὰ βάρβαρα πρὸ τῶν ἑκάστῳ οἰκείων;).[10]

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[10] Porphyry, in his letter to Anebo, ed. by A.R. Sodano, *Porfirio, Lettera ad Anebo* (Naples 1958) 22, as discussed by Peter Struck in the present volume. This calls to mind Aristotle's description of and reservations against γλῶτται, "glosses"(*Rh.* 1404 ff.; *Poet.* 457 ff.). He contrasts γλῶτται to κύρια, "current words", which are in general use in a given language, while glosses are obsolete and ξενικά, "foreign and anomalous", though distinctive, since due to their singularity and independence of ordinary language these words have a certain "dignity" (σεμνόν). As their essential characteristic is not its meaning but its form they are not helpful for communication and, consequently, they are "entirely poetical" (πάντως ποιητικόν). Hence Aristotle advised against using them even if he could not foresee such extremes as reached in early Christian γλώσσαις λαλεῖν, "speaking in tongues (i.e. strange words)". See: J. Whatmough, *Poetic, Scientific and Other Forms of Discourse: A new approach to Greek and Latin literature* (Berkeley 1956) 105-9. On the early history of the concepts 'foreign words' and 'barbarous words' see: B. Rochette, Les ξενικά et les βαρβαρικὰ ὀνόματα dans les théories linguistiques gréco-latines, *L'antiquité classique* 65 (1996) 91-105. On the similarities and dissimilarities between glossolalia and *voces magicae,* see for instance: D.E. Aune, "Magic in Early Christianity", *ANRW* II.23.2 (1980) 1507-1557, esp. 1549-51: "Glossolalia and *Voces Magicae.*"

Before investigating these questions I shall give a brief survey of the material that forms our primary source of information. Next I shall survey the various types of verbal strategies that were applied to make the charms work.

II *Brief survey of the material*

For the present occasion I have selected as my main source the incantations and charms used in the atmosphere of remedies and recipes: medical or more generally useful prescriptions in the largest sense of the word. They include simple instructions to get rid of a headache, a fever or an ulcer. But they can also contain advice to ward off thieves, wolves, snakes, lightning, hail or the evil eye: in sum any possible form of misfortune. In addition to these medical and evil-averting motifs, they may also include techniques to receive a dream, to attract the love or desire of another person, to harm an enemy, etcetera. In the latter cases we are at the very border of another class of magical texts: the curse texts or *defixiones*, mostly brief texts written on lead tablets.[11] Interesting though they may be, I shall not deal with them here, but focus on the magical incantations and more especially the charms.[12]

We have two comprehensive collections of these texts from antiquity: one is the corpus of the Greek magical papyri, published with a German translation in two volumes by Karl Preisendanz and reviewed and republished by Albert Henrichs. An English translation has been published by Hans Dieter Betz and his team.[13] Besides

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[11] Two recent discussions: J.G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells* (New York - Oxford 1992), and D. Ogden, "Binding Spells: Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls in the Greek and Roman Worlds", in: V. Flint, R. Gordon, G. Luck and D. Ogden, *Witchraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome* (London 1999) 1-90. Cf. also Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, Ch. V, "Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls" (pp.118-174). The frequent publications of new (or new readings of) curse texts and charms by the greatest expert in the field, David Jordan, deserve special mention.

[12] Gordon, "The Healing Event", 367, draws a distinction between charms (being allusive, pregnant, not meant to be fully understood, orally composed and transmitted and mainly focussed on the act of healing) and incantations (being explicit, elaborated and concrete, often the creation or re-creation of a professional practitioner). But for the present occasion I prefer to use one comprehensive term for the total complex of the verbal magical spell and will as a rule speak of charms or spells.

[13] K. Preisendanz, *Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die griechischen Zauberpapyri* (1928-1931), second edition by A. Henrichs (Stuttgart 1973-1974); H.-D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* (Chicago-London 1986). Betz informs me that the announced second volume promising an extensive commentary has been cancelled. A collection of recent finds on papyrus: R.W. Daniel & F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I, II (Opladen 1990, 1992).

shorter instructions for all sorts of medical or other emergencies, these magical papyri (dating from roughly the second century AD into late antiquity) also include very elaborate texts with extensive formulas that betray an unmistakably intellectualist, if not pedantic and priggish, climate with a penchant to mystery and esoteric theology.

The other body of texts consists of far more simple and modest, mostly brief charms for domestic use, nearly always for healing, as we find them in late antique textbooks on medicine, veterinary art, farming, such as Pliny the Elder, Marcellus Medicus, and the Hippiatric corpus.[14] Though partially influenced by the formulaic material as presented by the magical papyri, they generally betray a more primitive and unsophisticated nature. These texts were collected in a fundamental article in 1892 by Heim,[15] presenting some 250 charms. Recently, Önnerfors[16] has presented a supplement of 60 charms, most of which, however, are early medieval. It does not make much sense, however, to draw too sharp dividing lines here, since there is a remarkably strong tradition leading from late antiquity into medieval magical charms,[17] which can even be traced in spells that were still in use some decades ago in backwards countries such as Bavaria, Austria and Switzerland.[18] For present purposes, then, I shall draw my

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[14] A good discussion: K.E. Rothschuh, *Iatromagie. Begriff, Merkmale, Motive, Systematik* (Opladen 1978).

[15] R.L.M. Heim, "Incantamenta magica graeca latina", *Jahrbuch für Classische Philologie*, Suppl. 19 (1892) 465-575.

[16] A. Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche in Texten der römischen und frühmittelalterlichen Medizin", in: G. Sabbah (ed.), *Études de médécine romaine* (St. Étienne 1988) 113-56. See also: *idem*, "Iatromantische Beschwörungen in der 'Physica Plinii Sangallensis'", *Eranos* 83 (1985) 235-52, a collection for the greater part already used by Heim, but with an important commentary.

[17] R. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge 1989) Ch. 2: "The Classical Inheritance"; V.I.J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Oxford 1991) Ch. 8, pp. 203-253, esp. 217 ff.

[18] Relevant material can also be found in two collections of translated texts concerning magic which together cover all antiquity: G. Luck, *Arcana mundi: magic and the occult in the Greek and Roman worlds* (Baltimore 1985) and M. Meyer and R. Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco 1994). For a general interpretation and comprehensive discussions of the place of magic in antiquity besides Graf's *Magic in the Ancient World*, see: A. Bernand, *Sorciers grecs* (Paris 1991) and B. Ankarloo and S. Clark (eds.), *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*, volume 2, *Ancient Greece and Rome*. Of special importance are the chapters by D. Ogden, "Binding Spells: Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls in the Greek and Roman Worlds", and R. Gordon, "Imagining Greek and Roman Magic", which gives us a taste of what is in store in his eagerly expected book *Spells of Wisdom*: *Magical Power in the Graeco-Roman World*. Two very useful collections of papers are Chr. Faraone & D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (Oxford 1991) and M. Meyer & P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden 1995).

material mainly from the collections of Heim (henceforth H.) and Önnerfors (henceforth Ö.),[19] though not shunning an occasional medieval example.[20]

III *The main formulaic strategies*

What kind of powerful words or expressions can we expect in these popular charms? Surveying the complete collection, amounting to more than 300 for the ancient Graeco-Roman world only (and many times more for the Middle Ages and Early Modern Europe), the reader will at first sight be bewildered by the variety of formulaic types. Yet, it is very well possible to list a limited and manageable number of recurrent tropes. I shall mention a number of the most popular ones and add a brief discussion of some interesting features.

III.1 *Names, words, and worse*

The most natural, though perhaps not most captivating, instruction is to explicitly mention the name of the patient or more generally the person who has to undergo the treatment.[21] Sometimes it suffices to *think of* the sick person: H. 33 *de eo cogitato, cui medeberis*.[22] As in many other cases that we shall encounter, one may rightly hesitate to call this a 'magical' formula. So this may be the right moment to emphasize, once and for all, that the precise nature we may wish to ascribe

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[19] For the present purpose I have preferred not to burden the text with extensive source information. The interested reader can easily find the references in the works of Heim and Önnerfors.

[20] I am much indebted to Fritz Graf for bibliographical advice and Richard Gordon for having communicated a very early draft of his *Spells of Wisdom*. Gordon has presented several topics of his forthcoming book in recent publications, notably "The Healing Event in Graeco-Roman Folk-medicine", in: P.H.J. van der Eijk, H.F.J. Horstmanshoff, P.H. Schrijvers (eds.), *Ancient Medicine in Its Socio-Cultural Context: papers read at the congress held at Leiden University, 13-15 April 1992* , II (Amsterdam-Atlanta 1995) 363-376, which is both a summary and an elaboration of precisely those sections of the forthcoming book that are of particular interest to my subject. See also: R. Gordon, "'What's in a List?' Listing in Greek and Graeco-Roman malign magical texts", in: D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery and E. Thomassen (eds.), *The World of Ancient Magic. Papers from the first International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens 4-8 May 1997* (Bergen 1999) 239-277.

[21] H. 1-15. Heim p. 471ff. takes these together with the next category under the name "incantamenta simplicia". We also find the instruction to write down the name of the *owner* of a sick horse: H. 12-14. Of course, the importance of the name in magic is common knowledge: A. Hopfner, "Mageia", *RE* 27 (1928) 301-393, esp. 334ff.; Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 10 n.34.

[22] Another instance: Ö. 30. A combination of naming and thinking: Ö. 16.

to the formulas under discussion is *not* my present concern. I am interested in powerful, efficacious—or at the very least necessary—words such as they are *inter alia* applied in what we commonly call magical charms, even when these charms do not essentially differ from plain medical instructions.[23]

More often we read the instruction to mention the name of the ailment that must be cured, especially at the occasion of the gathering of medicinal herbs.[24] For instance H. 29:

> "When you enter a city, collect pebbles that lie on the road in front of the gate, as many as you want, while saying to yourself that you take them as a remedy for your headache. Attach one of them to your head and throw the others behind you without looking back."

We observe that the *materia medica* (pebbles!) is made effective by a certain action, but when it comes to the utterance it is only its function that is mentioned. This may serve as a first warning not too easily to assume a *natural*, though secret and hidden, efficacy in the numerous plants and herbs that are used in magical treatments.

However, there is a completely different category of words or names that is most characteristic of magical *carmina*, albeit with few exceptions they do not appear in classical Greek or Hellenistic texts but only become current in the Roman period. We have already met with a possible example in the mysterious terms handed down in the formula by Cato and we referred to them as *voces magicae*, strange, uncanny and apparently un-Greek and un-Latin words.[25] The oldest known example is a series of six words: ἀσκιον, κατασκιον, λιξ, τετραξ,

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[23] That does not mean that attempts at working magic cannot be distinguished, also in connection with the names of patients or illnesses. For instance when the number of letters of the patient's name, while being mentioned, should determine the number of knots that must be made in an unused thread. For the moment, however, I am trying not to get entangled in the vexed question of the relationship of magic, religion, and science. For my position in the discussion see: H.S. Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion", *Numen* 38: 177-197.

[24] H. 18-39, with discussion and more examples at p. 561; Ö. 29.

[25] H. 178-242 has collected the *voces magicae* in the charms of late antiquity. The basic work on *voces magicae* is: Th. Hopfner, *Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* (Leipzig 1921-24, dactylographic edition, re-edited in a modernized form: Amsterdam I 1974, II 1983, III 1990). Recent short discussions with more literature: R. Kotansky, in: Faraone & Obbink, *Magika Hiera,* 110-112; F. Graf, "Prayer in Magic and Religious Ritual", in: Faraone & Obbink, *Magika Hiera*, 190-5; Gager, *Curse Tablets*, 5-12; Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World,* 218-222; D. Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: the power of the word in Egyptian and Greek traditions", *Helios* 21 (1994) 189-221, esp. 199-205. Henceforth I shall use the term *voces magicae* for all lexically nonsemantic terms, including the *Ephesia grammata* of the next note.

δαμναμενευς, αἰσιον/αἰσια (*askion, kataskion, lix, tetrax, damnameneus, aision/aisia*), whose earliest documentation is in a fragment from a comedy of the fourth century BC, where they are referred to as *Ephesia grammata* (Ephesian letters).[26] And we find them also in a fifth century inscription and a fourth century curse tablet.[27] According to Pausanias they owe their name to the fact that they were originally incised in the cult statue of Artemis of Ephesos. These very words and a great variety of different ones turn up again and again in later magical and theological texts and are supposed to carry strong magical power, especially—but not exclusively—as averters of evil. The oldest of these 'magical words' thus originated in Greece, but foreign influences became ever more prevalent and the formulas ever more extensive and complex in the imperial period.[28]

It is in this period, too, that a most important and curious development took place. The strange *words* (sometimes referred to under the collective name of *Ephesia grammata*) tended to become *names* (the more restricted meaning of *voces magicae*). The powerful sounds acquired an additional function as they were understood to be the secret names of mysterious deities invoked in the spells. In other words, we perceive a new *theogonia*, a process of explosive creativity in which divine powers emerge from powerful words. The names of these new gods and demons easily amalgamated with other existing names that were also characteristic of magical formulas but which, from the beginning, were imagined as names of real gods or demons. Especially names ending on -el and -oth abound, which clearly go back to Hebrew/Jewish models, such as the name of god Sabaoth, or the variety of

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[26] The *Ephesia grammata* have exercised an enormous fascination from their early appearance until the present day, provoking a large number of works. I mention: K. Wessely, *Ephesia Grammata aus Papyrusrollen, Inschriften, Gemmen etc.* (Vienna 1886); C.C. McCown, "The Ephesia Grammata in Popular Belief", *TAPA* 54 (1923) 128-40; Preisendanz, "Ephesia Grammata". For a recent discussion and literature see: Gager, *Curse Tablets*, 6f. D.R. Jordan, "A Love Charm with Verses", *ZPE* 72 (1988) 256-57, suggests that these Ephesia Grammata originally formed a comprehensible Greek hexameter. Cf. Daniel & Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I no. 49. Others had already tried to isolate understandable elements, such as *damnameneus*: "the tamer". For an extensive bibliography see: R. Kotansky, "Incantations and Prayers for Salvation on Inscribed Greek Amulets", in: Faraone & Obbink, *Magika Hiera*, 107-137, esp. 111, with nn. 21. ff., also mentioning new findings.

[27] Cf. L.H. Jeffrey, "Further Comments on Archaic Greek Inscriptions", *ABSA* 50 (1955) 75 f.

[28] Additionally we find strange signs and figures that do not function as, but sometimes strongly remind us of letters. I shall not discuss these *'charakteres'*, for which see: Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing", 205-11.

names of angels such as Michael, Gabriel, etc.[29] Here, too, a process of associative creativity produced a profusion of new divine names. Often it is not possible to make a definite distinction between the authentic, 'real' divine names and the non-referential *voces magicae*, with which they are eagerly combined in long strings: *logoi*.

To give one extreme instance of our aporia: the vowels of the Greek alphabet, α – ε – η – ι – ο – υ – ω , are often used as non-referential *voces magicae* or characters, but they may also refer to the seven planets and thus acquire a referential substantiality. Finally, they receive a new function as the Names of the Seven Archangels, as for instance in a famous inscription in the wall of the theater from Miletus, where each of the seven characters is associated with two sets of vowels. Fortunately, in a 4/5th century papyrus we get the precise (that is in this period of time and cultural context) information which vowel order represents which archangel, as it provides a list of the archangels involved: Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Souriel, Zaziel, Badakiel, Suliel.[30]

But let us return to the *voces magicae* proper, the abracadabra-words, and repeat our question: did they have a 'meaning' or were they just 'nonsense'? The answer cannot be simple, for more than one reason. First, I must call to mind the possibility that at least part of these strange words may have originated as 'normal' words, either in the speakers' own language or in a foreign one. But there are other formulas in which this is obviously not the case, for instance in such a series, very popular in especially African curse tablets from the second century onwards, as: *Alimbeu, colombeu, petalimbeu, cuigeu, censeu, cinbeu, perfleu*; or: *cuigeu, censeu, cinbeu, perfleu, diarunco deasta.* But if, according to some modern scholars, even their origin must be sought in 'normal' words,[31] then we can always resort to unmistakable neologisms such as H. 189: ψα ψε ψη ψε ψη ψα ψε (*psa pse psê pse psê psa pse*) to be

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[29] Full, if at present no longer exhaustive, collection in: E. Peterson, "Engel- und Dämonennamen. Nomina barbara", *Rheinisches Museum* 75 (1926) 393-421. See now: S.M. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (Tübingen 1993); P.W. van der Horst, "Ontwikkelingen in de vroege Joodse angelogie", *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 48 (1994) 141-50. More literature: W. M. Brashear, in: Meyer & Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power,* 220-1.

[30] On the use of letters, especially vowels in spells, the fundamental study was and still is: F. Dornseiff, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie* (Leipzig 1925). An excellent recent treatment in: Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing", 199-205. For a discussion and picture of the Milesian inscription (*CIG* II, 2895) see: A. Deissmann, *Licht vom Osten* (Tübingen 19234) 393-99, espec. 396.

[31] A. Audollent, *Defixionum tabellae* (Paris 1904) LXIX ff.

sure that here we have genuinely 'magical words'. Now, there can be little doubt that *none* of these series of *voces magicae*, whatever their origin, in their historical context carried any lexically semantic meaning usable in human communication. Although they do evoke a certain atmosphere, there is no object or concept which they are supposed to refer to. The only thing they refer to is themselves.[32] However, there is another side. Various authors of late antiquity, among whom the Christian Clement of Alexandria, argue that normal human language was not appropriate in addressing higher beings or god(s). Homer already knew that there was a specific language of the gods, and despite centuries of human prayer in normal human language, the idea of a special divine language never completely disappeared from human imagination. In later antiquity it was believed that demons or gods understood the sounds of the *voces magicae*, even if the human producers did not. In other words, now these terms did serve communication but a communication that could only be understood by one of the two partners in the communication.[33]

Finally, in the same period, we also see *voces magicae* used in theurgy, 'the compelling of a god', for instance to make him appear or act according to the wish of the theurgist.[34] Pliny *NH* 28, 19 (a passage which we shall discuss in more detail later), though generally

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[32] "Die geheimnisvolle Macht jener Wörter (oder Worte) liegt für den Abergläubigen in der Unverständlichkeit. Sie sind mit dem Zaubergerät vergleichbar, das sonst keinem sinnvollen, alltäglichen Zwecke dient" (Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 115).

[33] Apart from the general literature mentioned above n.25, see recently, especially on the *voces magicae* as divine names and in theurgy: J. Dillon, "The Magical Power of Names in Origen and Later Platonism", in: R. Hanson & H. Crouzel (eds.), *Origeniana Tertia. The Third Colloquium for Origen Studies* (Rome 1985) 203-16; N. Janowitz, "Theories of Divine Names in Origen and Pseudo-Dionysius", *History of Religions* 30 (1990) 359-372. On the implications of name giving and the power inherent in knowing the correct names of gods or demons, especially in magical contexts, literature abounds. See: B. Gladigow, "Götternamen und Name Gottes", in: H. von Stietencron (ed.), *Der Name Gottes* (Düsseldorf 1975) 13-32, esp. 19-23; *idem*, "Gottesnamen", *RAC* 11 (1981) 1202-38, esp. 1206-8. For a sceptical re-consideration of the general idea that to know the name of a god is to have power over him, see: S. Pulleyn, "The Power of Names in Classical Greek Religion," *CQ* 44 (1994) 17-25 (= *idem*, *Prayer in Greek Religion* [Oxford 1997] 96-115), which may just be true as far as the title goes. Cf. also Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 218-29.

[34] On theurgy see: G. Luck, "Theurgy and Forms of Worship in Neoplatonism", in: J. Neusner, E.S. Frerichs, and P.V.M. Flesher (eds.), *Religion, Science, and Magic in Concert and Conflict* (New York-Oxford 1989) 185-225; B. Nasemann, *Theurgie und Philosophie in Jamblichs "De Mysteriis"* (Stuttgart 1991).

deriding *voces magicae*, must admit that the "human mind does expect something 'immense' (referring to the awe inspired by these strange words), which is adequate to move a god or rather to impose its will on his divinity" (*dignum deo movendo, immo vero quod numini imperet*).

III.1.1 *Complications*

However, we must complicate matters. We have now made acquaintance with what is usually seen as one of the most characteristic features of magic: strange and incomprehensible sounds, words, phrases, originally used as autonomous instruments to add power to the magical act, 'to make it work'. We saw them developing into acclamations or exhortations to raise (or compel) divine forces to activity, and finally we saw them acquire a referential status as the personal names of the gods invoked. All this, however, does not mean that 'normal words' or 'normal gods', or 'normal addresses' to gods do not occur. Far from it, and one of the most alarming observations is that the two types of expression happily coexist through the centuries, also in combinations of a most unexpected kind.

To give an example: names of great gods, demons, or generally holy persons are widely used in typical formulas of expulsion or protection. There are a few recurrent types. In one the illness is exorcised

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[35] An illustrative series in Ö. 38-44, with discussion at pp. 120-22; cf. *idem*, *In medicinam Plinii studia philologica* (Lund 1956) 222 f. This type of text is commonly found on amulets and rings. Kotansky, "Incantations and Prayers for Salvation", has a full discussion with bibliography; see esp. 113 and 119 for the 'flee' formula. I do not find it helpful to make a rigorous distinction between them and magical charms. Both categories originated as oral enunciations, now fixed in written words, that are meant to carry the incantations beyond the ritual, the primary performance, of an invariably *verbal* rite (Kotansky, *o.c.* 108-110. Cf. Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing", 195). The flee curses provoke a specific problem: if you chase away the illness, where does it remain? Of course, you can ignore the problem and just focus on getting rid of the sickness: *apopompê*. But you can also specify where it must go: to a deserted place, where no mortal lives, or—more rewardingly—to the enemy country: *epipompê*. The classical work on the mentality involved is: O. Weinreich, "Primitiver Gebetsegoismus", in: *Gebet und Wunder. Zwei Abhandlungen zur Religions- und Literaturgeschichte* (Stuttgart 1929); *idem*, "Religiös-ethische Formen der Epipompe", *Ausgewählte Schriften* III (Amsterdam 1979) 291-308. Cf. H. S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship* (Leiden 1981) 17-21, with further literature. Significantly, this becomes one of the central tests for the distinction between magical spell and Christian 'Segen' in the later Middle Ages. Most explicitly in the *Malleus Maleficarum* or 'Hexenhammer', written in 1486 by the inquisitors Jacob Sprenger and Heinrich Krämer (German translation by J.W.R. Schmidt, Berlin 1906; English: M. Summers, London 1928).

and sent away, sometimes with a simple command: "be gone" *(exi)*, but very often in the name of a demon or god, who has the power to chase the sickness.[35] Often the illness receives the order: "flee for a god chases you." The name of the persecuting demon, god or hero[36] may vary, and both pagan, Jewish and Christian gods and saints freely intermingle, although pride of place should be given to Solomon. *Solomon te sequitur* or its Greek pendant is a top remedy against illness, misfortune or particularly against the evil eye, as it is standard in amulets, gems and rings.[37] Yet, Solomon was by no means the only persecutor and, most curiously, the process of associative engineering has even managed conversely to invoke the evil eye against an illness: Ö. 14, *Ignis sacer, fuge, Livor pater te sequitur*, in which *ignis sacer* probably is *erysipilas*, a reddish eruption on the skin, while *Livor pater* can only be 'the evil eye'. The formula of protection, on the other hand, could be seen on many houses. Its scheme is: "sickness keep away, for here lives (or: "you are warded off by") NN" (god, hero or saint). The most popular Greek defenders are Apollo and Herakles and in Christian times Christ took their place.[38]

So we have 'normal' prayers requesting that the illness must be gone together with 'abnormal' *voces magicae* with the same objective. We have 'normal' gods that are invoked or compelled, side by side with 'abnormal', foreign, strange divine beings who do the same thing. As I said before, the alarming thing is not that they replace each other in the course of time, but that they are and remain interchangeable. Indeed, this trait of exchangeability appears to be perhaps one of the most characteristic, albeit hardly noticed, features of magical charms. Let me clarify what I have in mind with the aid of a

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[36] Exceptionally the persecutor belongs to the natural world: H. 68, "Flee away, ... a wild wolf is chasing after your blood".

[37] See the discussion and literature in Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 120 ff. The Jewish author Flavius Josephus, *Ant. Iud.* 8, 2, 5, explains that Solomon owes his popularity as a magician to his lauded wisdom (Cf. Kings 4: 29-34). Hence, God granted him also the qualities to heal or ward off illness. Another great Jewish magician (though not prominent in spells) is Moses: J.G. Gager, *Moses in Graeco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville-New York 1972); cf. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 6-7. Spells may also contain the—often sorely corrupted—names of four great Greek philosophers: Pythagoras, Demokritos, Sokrates, and Plato (H. 121), three of whom were believed to have been deeply interested in magic (Plin. *NH.* 30, 8-10).

[38] Fundamentally: O. Weinreich, "Unheilbannung im Volkstümlichen Gebet, Segen und Zauberspruch", in: *Ausgewählte Schriften* III (Amsterdam 1979) 199-223.

few examples. First, two spells to get information on the chastity of a woman,[39] H. 216:

> "If you wish to know whether a woman is still chaste (literally: a virgin) or if she has been adulterous..... Another trick: cut the tongue of a live frog and let the frog go. Write on that tongue, which you have cut from the frog, as follows: χουνεχω δημινοοφ (*chounechô dêminoöph*) and while the woman is asleep lay the tongue on her breast. She will tell you everything she has done."

Now, immediately following this charm we read in the same text:

> "Another one: cut out the tongue of a live frog and let the frog go and on the tongue write *the name of the woman* and while she is asleep place the tongue on her breast and thus question her, and if she has indeed been abused, she will tell you the name of the adulteror".

A second example. In a chapter on deficiencies and illnesses of the head we read, H. p. 556:

> "Against a headache of one half of the head (a kind of migraine) shut off your breath with the right hand, spread it over your cerebrum and say: *hoerbae et hooras erbaebo abraxat boetitae*."

This charm again is immediately followed by another in the same text:

> "Headaches you will enchant: take some earth, touch your breast three

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[39] This precarious question, by the way, seems to have been a constant concern for ancient men. We have it in an oracular question from Dodona: H.W. Parke, *The Oracles of Zeus* (Oxford 1967) 266 no. 11; also in Theocr. 3, 31-3. In *PGM* VII, 411-6, which seems to be distantly related to our charm, the heart of a hoopoe is used for the same purpose, whereas Plin. *NH* 32, 49, comes quite close to it with the tongue of a frog placed on the woman's chest. Cf. also *NH* 29, 81, where it is an owl's heart that does the trick; in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*, Gordon analyses these texts and notes that the frog, an amphibious animal, is the ideal ambivalent vehicle between two different worlds. See also: W. Brashear, "Zauberformular", *APF* 36 (1990), 49-74, esp. 55-6. M.W. Dickie, "The Learned Magician and the Collection and Transmission of Magical Lore" in: D.R. Jordan *et alii, The World of Ancient Magic*, 163-193, esp. 183 ff., traces this type of spell back to Bolus of Mendes (3d century BC, Egypt), as a transmitter of ancient Babylonian spells concerning "the recovery of alienated affection". He also sketches their continued existence into the 15th century AD. For Jewish parallels see: P. Schäfer and Sh. Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza* I (Tübingen 1994), 17-28, and elsewhere: "Beschreibung von Praktiken zur Prüfung einer des Ehebruchs verdächtigten Frau, die einen Ersatz für den in Num. 5,11-31 beschriebenen Brauch bilden sollen". As to the male side, there are Greek oaths to establish fatherhood: Herodotus 6.68; Andocides 1.126.

> times and say: My head hurts, why does it hurt? It does not hurt" (*caput dolet, quare dolet? Non dolet*).[40]

Which of the two will be more efficacious? The one with the 'normal' names and words? Or the one with the 'abnormal' *voces magicae*? Here Pliny *NH* 28, 20, finds himself in serious trouble. For on the one hand he had already categorically rejected the abracadabra nonsense, on the other hand he cannot but wonder:

> "It is not easy to say which of the two detracts more from the credibility of a formula: foreign and unpronounceable words or Latin words which however are unexpected,[41] and which must appear ridiculous to our mind, since our mind expects something immense, something adequate

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[40] Of course, there may be very good reasons for changing the formula. For instance we have two groups of codices from the 6th century giving parallel instructions to extract the teeth of a badger for some magical trick (Ö. 32). One group instructs the patient to say: *In nomine Omnipotentis decollo te* ("In the name of the Almighty I decapitate you"), another: *Butabar torthon hydran cermalis metonbor loro namdison tha saniorden*. Here, it is most probable that a Christian author has 'corrected' the text, since one of the official distinctions between magic and religion according to the Medieval *Malleus Maleficarum* (above n. 35) was whether the name of God, Christ or the Saints was invoked or, on the other hand, odd names of demons. *Malleus* II, 239: A spell may contain nothing "what comes to an explicit or implicit invocation of Demons"; "no unknown names". The only words permitted are "the holy words themselves" (*ibid.* 240, cf. M. Siller, "Zauberspruch und Hexenprozess. Die Rolle des Zauberspruchs in den Zauber-und Hexenprozessen Tirols", in: W.M. Bauer, A. Masser, G.A.Plangg [eds.], *Tradition und Entwicklung. Festschrift Eugen Thurner zum 60. Geburtstag* [Innsbruck 1982] 127-153). Very much the same can be deduced from the spells and exorcisms as collected for instance in: Ch. Stewart, *Demons and the Devil* (Princeton 1991) Ch.9: "Spells: On the Boundary between Church Practice and Sorcery", 222-43. Heim 469f. lists three reasons why *voces magicae* in spells may be eliminated or replaced by other formulas: 1) an ancient author may refuse to quote them as e.g. Pliny *NH* 17, 267; 28, 29; 2) Christian monks may do the same for obvious reasons (Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, 5, notes that sometimes pages have been excised from compilations for this reason); 3) sometimes *voces magicae* are lacking although they have been announced earlier in the same text, and as a reason is given that this is expressly done in order not to reveal the secret text. In magical papyri we find the instruction not to divulge the text, e.g. *PGM* XII, 321-4: "For this is the true rite, and the others such as are widely circulated, are falsified and made up of vain verbosity. So keep this in a secret place as a great mystery. Hide it, hide it!". Comparably, a medieval text warns the person who wants to use a charm to keep the words of the incantation secret by folding it tightly in parchment, lest some lay person acquires it (L. Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England: verbal healing in a Christian oral tradition", *Oral tradition* 7 [1992] 116-142, esp. 136). For a general treatment of Christian interventions in pagan magic, see: V. Flint, "The Demonisation of Magic and Sorcery in Late Antiquity: Christians redefinitions of pagan religions", in: Ankarloo and Clark (eds.), *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe* 2, *Ancient Greece and Rome*, 277-348.

[41] I agree with Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 139 n.26, that the interpretation 'les étranges mots latins' (A. Ernout in the Budé edition) cannot be correct. The context unequivocally requires: "Latin words and *for that very reason* unexpected in magical contexts."

to move a god or rather to impose its will on his divinity" (*Neque est facile dictu externa verba atque ineffabilia abrogent fidem validius an Latina et inopinata, quae inridicula videre cogit animus semper aliquid inmensum exspectans ac dignum deo movendo, immo vero quod numini imperet).*

This hesitation reveals at least as much about the nature of magic as it does about the weakness of Pliny's character. He finds 'normal' words—though meaningful—insignificant, whereas 'abnormal' words—though meaningless—can be 'immense', that is sublime, majestic, hence highly significant!

Is it for this reason that instead of making it optional (as in our last two texts), numerous other charms simply unite the 'meaningless' and the 'meaningful'? For instance Ö. 27[42], where a spell against cancer in the breast confronts us with a combination of abnormal *voces magicae*, followed by a magical formula in normal language, which again is followed by a prayerlike invocation of the Christian god:

"*asca, basca, rastaia, serc, cercer, recercel.* Nothing is it, nothing is it, nothing it will do. What I, son or daughter of NN, have in my breast, I pray you, God, take care of it." (*asca, basca, rastaia, serc, cercer, recercel; nihil est, nihil est, nihil facturum erit. Quod ego ille aut illa filius Gaiae Seiae mamillis si pectus habeo a te, deus, peto, praestes.*)

So we observe that in the magical charms comprehensible and incomprehensible 'magical' words and phrases are both exchangeable and cumulative.[43] Accordingly, lists of alternative instructions for one

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[42] Cf. Ö. 20.

[43] Here is another splendid example: a medieval spell for advancing childbirth in which three different strategies are intertwined. I adopt the format used by Olsan, "Zaubersprüche", 121, in which capitals distinguish the words containing power (the mistakes in the orthography are neither hers nor mine):

In nomine patris LAZARUS. Et filij VENI FORAS
et spiritus scantus CHRISTUS TE VOCAT
+ CHRISTUS + STONAT +
IESUS PREDICAT + CHRISTUS REGNAT + EREX + AREX +
RYMEX + CHRISTI ELEYZON + EEEEEEEEE +

Here we have first a frame of liturgical expressions to set the ceremonious atmosphere: "In the name of the Father etc", larded with intelligible, 'normal' powerwords taken from Christian mythology, which have a bearing on the situation of childbirth: LAZARUS, because of his resurrection compared with childbirth here, COME FORTH and CHRIST CALLS YOU. Thirdly, there is a series of nonsense words, which, however, may betray a wordplay on REX = king, triggered by the spell CHRISTUS REGNAT: "Christ rules". Like late antique charms medieval Latin charms display a variety of linguistic forms 1) nonsensical sounds, 2) Latin verse, 3) strings of powerful names, 4) narrative themes, 5) performatives of adjuration and conjuration and prescriptives. See the analysis by Olsan, o.c. 124-139 (and another very complex example on p. 137) and B.K. Halpern & J.M. Foley, "The Power of the Word: Healing Charms as an Oral Genre", *Journal of American Folklore* 91 (1978) 903-24.

and the same illness strongly suggest that it was a common practice, if one device did not work, to resort to another. Contrary to the usual notion of magic with its assumed automatic and mechanic effects, this optionality, in terms of both repetition and alternation, is indeed widely attested: if a trick did not work one must try it another time or try another, and again and again until it works.[44]

In the meantime one question forces itself on the observer. If you do *not* use exotic *voces magicae*, and yet—like Pliny—feel that normal Latin words (*caput non dolet*) are perhaps not sufficiently 'immense' or majestic to be taken seriously as genuine magical instruments, are there any means to add 'immensity' to *verba latina*—means, in other words, that can add what we might call 'magical quality' to the formula? Indeed, there are, and we are now going to pay attention to the two most specific strategies. One of them concerns the content, the other more formal aspects of the formula.

III.2 *The appeal to analogy: comparison, similes, historiolae*

One of the great strategies to add efficacy to words is to appeal to exemplary models, which for some reason or other are powerful in themselves, and if incorporated into the formula impart their power, in other words persuasive force. This is the strategy of analogy, which includes a great number of different techniques, such as comparison, simile, metaphor, historiolae.[45] I shall give a few examples.

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[44] E.g., H. 181: first the plant millefolium must be dug out. Then it must be planted again. "If the plant does not revive, *repeat* the performance *with another*." In magical papyri repetition of magical words often with slight variations is a common phenomenon: e.g. *PGM* II, 52-60. It is a well-known practice in religious ritual as well, especially in ritual of an oracular type: Plut. *Aem. Paul.* 17, 6 (20 times); Xen. *Anab.* 6, 4, 12 (23 times). It could also be prescribed in advance to repeat a formula, as Cato did in connection with the spell discussed above or e.g. H. 112 (discussed by Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 126): *remediasti, si frequentius (frequenter) incantaveris* ("you will recover if you will sing this frequently"); also in *PGM* IV, 3089 f. In Mark 8:22-26, the repetition of the healing gesture increases its success. On different optional wordings for the same recipes: D.G. Martinez, *P. Michigan XVI: A Greek Love Charm from Egypt (P.Mich 757)* (American Studies in Papyrology 30, 1991) 6 f.

[45] These typical elements of magical charms have been discussed time and again. Heim, "Incantamenta magica graeca latina", 495 ff. already has a good discussion and Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 123-129, another. In his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*, Gordon has a fascinating section on it. For *historiolae* see: D. Frankfurter, "Narrating Power: the theory and practice of the magical *historiola* in ritual spells", in: M. Meyer & P. Mirecki (eds.), *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden 1995) 457-476. On mythical themes as applied in Egyptian magic in general: J. Podemann Sørensen, "The Argument in Ancient Egyptian Magical Formulae", *Acta Orientalia* 45 (1984) 5-19; in German spells: K.A. Wipf, "Die Zaubersprüche im Althochdeutschen", *Numen* 22 (1975) 42-69. For a general theory on the nature of "parallelization" see: T. Todorov, *Les genres du discours* (Paris 1978).

1 You can compare the *illness* with an analogon taken from nature: H. 54 addresses the disease called *strophus*:

> "Why do you fulminate, why do you stir like a dog, why do you jump up like a hare? Be quiet, intestines, stand still crocodile" (*quid irasceris? quid sicut canis iactas te? quid sicut lepus resilis? quiesce intestinum et sta crocodile*).[46]

More often the *act of healing* is compared or identified with natural occurrences. For instance H. 84, a spell for good digestion:

> "a wolf went along road, along track. Raw food he devoured, liquids he drank" (*lupus ibat per viam, per semitam, cruda vorabat, liquida bibebat*).

or H. 51, a spell against swollen glands (tonsils):

> "white glands do not hurt, do not harm, do not swell into a tumor, but become liquid like salt in water" (*albula glandula, nec doleas, nec noceas, nec paniculas facias, sed liquescas tamquam salis in aqua*).

or H. 111, a spell against damage of the veins:

> "mountains dry up, valleys dry up, veins dry up, especially those which are full of blood" (*siccant montes, siccant valles, siccant venae, vel quae de sanguine sunt plenae)*.

2 But you can also create yourself the (natural) circumstances that must serve as analogon. For instance H. p. 561 against quartan fever:

> "You must collect three pebbles from a quadrivium (crossroads) and hide them in a concealed cooking pot and say: just as the sun cannot see these pebbles so let not the quartan fever see them" (*de quadrivio collecti lapilli tres, subiectos in cacabo abscondito et dicis: quomodo hos sol videre non potest, sic et illos quartanae non videant*).

or H. p. 563: in order to stimulate his libido a man must perform various manipulations with a stick and then say:

> "just as this stick is erect, let also my 'natura' be erect and strong" (*quemadmodum hic palus erectus est, sic et natura mea erigatur et fortis sit)*.

We have met this construction of a 'natural' parallel before, namely in the text of Cato. It is one of the common devices of the magical act: what used to be called 'sympathetic' magic, but which modern scholarship prefers to see as an act of performative persuasion through analogy.

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[46] Though, of course, there are Egyptian spells against crocodiles ("It is Isis, who recites: there is no crocodile", P. mag. Harris, spell P) the word 'crocodile' cannot very well have been intended here, and Heim, "Incantamenta magica graeca latina", 479, has the ingenious suggestion that it is a corruption of *corcus*, meaning 'rumbling of the bowels'. If he is right, as I think he is, this is a splendid instance of the 'drive towards alienation' discussed below.

3 However, next to these examples taken from nature, there is another, quite different source of powerful analoga. It consists of models that are stored in the cultural legacy of a civilization. For the later Roman period three great literary works were the most favourite sources of powerful *exempla*: Homer, Vergil and the Bible.[47] It need not be the power of the divine or heroic protagonists that was referred or resorted to: the works themselves, so it was believed, contained a deep, hidden wisdom and force, as witness also the endless allegorizations of the Homeric epics in the Hellenistic period, and the evolution of Vergil from a pagan poet to a wise magician and even a prophet of the Christian faith.[48] These are exemplary instances of 'traditional referentiality', to quote John Miles Foley, for one line evokes "a context that is enormously larger and more echoic than the text or work itself".[49] So if you suffer from bad eyesight you quote the Homeric verse (H. 104)

> "Take this mist from my eyes, that was there before" (ἀχλὺν δ'αὖ τοι ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἔλον, ἣ πρὶν ἐπῆεν, *Il.* 5,127),

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[47] For biblical quotations in a magical context see: J. Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: a study in folk religion* (New York 1939=1982), esp. 104-13; E. A. Judge, "The Magical Use of Scripture in the Papyri", in: E.W. Conrad and E.G. Newing (eds.), *Perspectives on Language and Text* (Winona Lake 1987) 339-49. Psalm 90 is *facile princeps*. See: Daniel-Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I, p. 73, with literature. Cf. also: Frankfurter, "Narrating Power", 465 n.25. Coptic magic for a considerable part consists of scripture quotations written as amulets, appeals to Christian gods and angels for practical concerns, applied versions of church liturgy and formulae, as noticed by D. Frankfurter, in: Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power*, 259-62; *idem*, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton 1998) 257-64; S.G Ritner, "Bemerkungen zu magischen Elementen koptischer Zaubertexte", *Archiv für Papyrusforschung*, Beiheft 3 (1997) 835-46. For Homer see: Kotansky, "Incantations", 132 n. 61.

[48] Divination and magic being closely associated, especially in the magical papyri (F. Graf, "Magic and Divination", in: D.R. Jordan *et alii*, *The World of Ancient Magic*, 283-98), it does not surprise that the very same powerful 'sacred' texts were equally popular as materials for oracular practice, especially in the divination through *sortes*, (lot-oracles): P.W. van der Horst, "Sortes: het gebruik van heilige boeken als lotsorakels in de oudheid", *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde* 62 (1999). The Homer-oracles (*Homeromanteia*) formed a special category consisting of a list of 216 disconnected Homeric verses, each of which was preceded by three figures, representing numbers from 1.1.1 to 6.6.6. The inquirer cast a single dice three times, and the result indicated the verse to be consulted. See for the most complete example: *PGM* VII, 1-148; cf. F. Maltomini, "P.Lond. 121 (= *PGM* VII) 1-221: Homeromanteion", *ZPE* 106 (1995) 107-122. Generally: F. Heinevetter, *Würfel- und Buchstabenorakel in Griechenland und Kleinasien* (Breslau 1912).

[49] J.M. Foley, *Immanent Art* (Bloomington 1991) 7. See also his interesting work on the oral tradition of charms, *i.a.* in: "Epic and Charm in Old English and Serbo-Croatian Oral tradition", *Comparative Criticsm* 2 (1980) 71-92.

or H. 105 (a fixed Homeric formula):

> "The Sun who sees and hears everything" (ἠέλιος ὃς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ πάντ' ἐπακούει).

And if you wish to advance parturition you quote from Vergil's *Aeneid* 4, 129 (H. 121):

> "in the meantime the dawn rose from Oceanus" (*Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit*).

Or, in a reverse comparison, if you suffer from podagra you must quote the Homeric line (H. p. 519):

> "the meeting was in uproar, the earth below groaned" (τετρήχει δ'ἀγορή, ὑπὸ δ'ἐστοναχίζετο γαῖα).[50]

4 Finally, the mighty feats of gods and heroes as they are described in these great literary works or are handed down by tradition, have a special attraction.[51] For the same problem for which Aurora must rise from the Ocean, namely difficult parturition, you can also quote a famous line from Verg. *Ecl.* 4,10 (Ö. 23):

> "Hail chaste Lucina (goddess of birth), your Apollo already reigns" (*Casta fave Lucina, tuus iam regnat Apollo*),

or Ö. 24:

> "Elisabeth gave birth to John the Baptist. Open yourself mother (here perhaps the name of the woman in labour must be mentioned) and send out from you the lamb born from man" (*Helisabet peperit Iohannem babtistam, aperi te, mater illa eius, quia nomen facit quae parturit et emitte ex te pecudem de homine creatum*).

But, of course, if a bone sticks in your throat another 'delivery' is required, which, too, can be advanced by the spell (Ö. 59):

> "Christ is born from the Virgin Maria" (*Christus de Maria virgine natus est*)

And if you suffer from worms you say Ö. 60:

> "Job had worms and through the vision of God they died and his ulcers were healed. Christ, let thus die the worms and ulcers of the servant of the Lord, that they cannot do him harm evermore. *Agyos, aios, ayos, sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, fiat, fiat, fiat AMEN*" (*Job vermes habuerit et per visionem domini mortui sunt et sanata fuit ulcera eius. Christe, sic moriatur vermes et ulcera*

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[50] This verse is also the only Homeric verse found engraved on a magic lamella: Kotansky, "Incantations", 118.

[51] The repertoire of themes is limited, especially in the Christian charms. Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 130, gives a list of purposes and the commonly connected narrative motifs.

quae habet famulus domini ut numquam ei amplius nocere possit. agyos, aios, ayos, sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, fiat, fiat, fiat AMEN).

Gods or heroes may also serve as models in that various plants and herbs are specially recommended since their medicinal force had been discovered or imparted by great gods such as Minerva, Apollo, Asclepios or the centaur Chiron.[52] But just as in the 'natural' analogies above there is ample room for creative inventions. If you suffer from your tonsils sing (H. p. 557):

"Neptunus had (sick) tonsils standing on (lit. over) a stone, here he stood and had nobody to cure him. So he healed himself with his triple 'sickle'" (*Neptunus tusellas habebat supra petram, hic stabat, neminem habuit, qui curaret, ipse se curavit falce sua triplice).*

Unnecessary to say that though sitting or standing on or above something (stone, sea), whatever may be intended, is a recurrent theme in this type of mythological charm,[53] Neptune had nothing to do with tonsils. The mighty name Neptunus itself is the effective analogon, as variants show.

So we may conclude for the moment that in formulas that resort to comparison and simile, which often are expanded into small histories (*historiolae*), the analoga could be sought in exemplary natural situations, situations that could also be imitated or created, on the one hand, and on the other in examples handed down by tradition (literary or not), which refer to a supranatural reality. In the latter case, there may be a shift: the supernatural model can also be invoked as supernatural actor.

III.2.1 *Complications*

We must, however, complicate matters. For I wish now to focus the attention on the extreme arbitrariness and inconsistencies in the choice and application of analogy. There appears to be an astonishing freedom both in the models that are selected and in the variety of applications of one model to different diseases and cures. Finally there is an abundance of alterations and transformations.

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[52] Examples in H.108, 109, 124-126, and Ö. 40-45. An early instance in Plin. *NH* 2, 176.

[53] L. Robert, "Amulettes grecques", *Journal des Savants* (1981) 9-16, presents many instances and traces its Jewish origin. It perseveres into medieval charms: *Iesus Christus super mare sedebat* or *Petrus iacebat super petram mormoriam* : Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 131 f. It seems to be conversely related with mythical figures coming out of the sea, who bring illnesses: A.A. Barb, "Antaura: The mermaid and the devil's grandmother", *Journal of the Wardburg and Courtauld Institutes* 29 (1966) 1-23.

Let us consider a very instructive charm: H. 167. A certain plant is applied in order to stop podagra, which was believed to be caused by a flux of blood, and then the plant is conjured by the name of great Iaoth Sabaoth,

> "the God who has fixed the earth and fastened the sea out of streaming, overflowing rivers, the One who dried up the wife of Lot and turned her into salt".

We observe various interesting features. First, we see that completely different and mutually incoherent acts of the great God are united in one search for analoga. There seems to be only one condition: that they have something to do with 'drying up'. Secondly, the analoga are not particularly self-evident or compelling. I mean: in case of a flux it seems quite appropriate to write on a paper the story of the bleeding woman who touched the garment of Jesus and was healed (as it was done), but the connection of streams of blood with the salted wife of Lot demands a lot of our imagination and the creator really invested some effort in this creation. And thirdly, to our logical mind, he did not even succeed in every respect. Admittedly, the wife of Lot, being of salt was dry at least, but turning rivers into sea cannot very well be characterized as drying up, whatever way you look at it. Here is a first hint that there may have been a taint of non-committal, if not relaxed, playfulness in the search for or invention of analoga.

A striking illustration of this is provided by a series of variations of a very popular medieval spell.[54] One is intended to cast a spell on a snake with the words:

> "stand still as the water of the Jordan stood still when John baptized our Lord Jesus".

The same effect is intended by a variant charm:

> "stand still just as Christus Jesus stood at the Jordan",

and this same text is repeated in another spell, which however is not directed against snakes but against fire. And there is a host of variants both in form and in application. It appears that people have (or claim) a considerable liberty in adapting or changing standing similes into sometimes essentially different ones without apparently detracting from their supposed effectiveness. Sometimes there is no obvious reason for the variation, on other occasions these "variations depend

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[54] Siller, "Zauberspruch und Hexenprozess", 127-153, esp. 134 f., with many variants. The Jordan may yield its place to the Euphrates: F. Maltomini, "Cristo all' Eufrate", *ZPE* 48 (1982) 149-170 = Daniel-Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I, no 32.

upon the identity of the frame, the immediate textual environment, and the performance situation".[55]

This 'arbitrariness'[56] becomes manifest in various other manners as well: for instance in the application of colour analogy: white anemones must *prevent* the white complexion that is caused by heavy drinking, just as yellow flowers are good to prevent or heal jaundice.[57] Contrarily, using a red cloth is recommended in order *to produce* a healthy red complexion. Whereas in different cases the red colour of a plant can again be employed *against* red ulcers and the like. So there is a wild variety, a multi-applicability of practically any object or example according to the free associations of the user. In the process of association anything goes, as long as there is the tiniest shred of similarity.[58] If you cannot immediately think of a positive analogon you create a negative one. The following simile (H. 101) is documented in a number of variations:

> "A mule cannot propagate, a stone cannot make wool" (*Nec mula parit, nec lapis lanam fert*),

which is then followed by the wish that in the same way the illness must not exist (anymore). Now, the first *adunaton, nec mula parit,* is a topos:[59] it is obvious, it is curious, everybody knew it and wondered why this was. So you can use it as an exemplary *adunaton* if you need one. The second, however, is neither curious nor relevant, it is an *ad hoc* invention, just a sudden idea, as there are many others in these *adunata* stories. Here is a variant in H. 101:

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[55] Halpern & Foley, "Zauberspruch und Hexenprozess", 909; splendid examples in Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 127-8, and 131-32.

[56] I must emphasize that the term 'arbitrary', which I shall use some more times, according to the dictionaries denotes two notions: "depending on or fixed through an exercise of *will, or by caprice*". Although, especially in the more formal variations of rhyme-words and *voces magicae* the latter meaning may prevail, one can often discern an at least subjective meaning and an immanent structure of differences, as Gordon, "The Healing Event", has shown. Cf. also the remark by Halpern and Foley above n.55.

[57] Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 123.

[58] And I know why. I have a green watering can, which I used for spreading pesticides to eradicate the weeds in my grass. My reason to use a *green* can was based on the association: poison is green, because the Dutch language has an expression "gifgroen" (green as poison). The next year I used that same can but, the original association having vanished from my memory, I took it that it referred to green as the symbol of unspoilt nature (cf. die Grünen) and used it for the opposite goal (with deplorable results). One can either regret the multireferentiality of analogy (as I did) or one can welcome it since it provides abundant opportunity for creative association (for which see below).

[59] Even to the extent that *mulae partus* was a prodigium and that the expression *cum mula pepererit* ("at the time that a mule will bear") meant "never". See: Heim, "Incantamenta magica graeca latina", 493 n.1.

> "because a mule does not propagate, a drinking-vessel does not drink, a pigeon has no teeth, so may my teeth not hurt" (*quod mula non parit, nec cantharus aquam bibit, nec palumba dentes habet, sic mihi dentes non doleant)*,

where, again, there is a decrease in obviousness of the analoga, this time going hand in hand with an increase of relevancy. Particularly in these *adunata* we descry an emphatic drive towards variation.

So we conclude for the moment that the choice of models in comparative formulas is liable to a liberty that often verges on arbitrariness. Although there are fixed and recurrent models, either taken from nature or from cultural tradition, which have an authority in themselves, the users are apparently free to vary, associate, recreate, make additions, and all this practically without restriction. In other words, there seems to be a remarkable tolerance or rather openness to improvisation. In this process we often observe that the *logical relevance* of a particular comparison is *not* the decisive consideration.[60] Obviously, one of the seminal intentions is to cancel the cure's isolation, to insert it into a recognizable series of comparable events or phenomena, some of which ended well. It is the *mise en série* that counts, and—so it seems—counts most. Different from, or in addition to, what is normally associated with magic and its supposed and sometimes explicitly prescribed stern tradition of fixed and inviolable formulas ("you shall not alter a jot or tittle of this formula"),[61] it seems that this proliferation of new and often singular formulas is a marked trait of the magical charm.[62] So we may well wonder if this profusion of new similes, this process of creativity, might not have

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[60] Consequently, the reverse is also true: one formula could be applied for several completely different purposes as the *PGM* (esp. IV, 2145-76) and such instructions as ὡς θέλετε (whatever you wish to achieve) illustrate.

[61] Just as it was common practice to attribute charms or rituals to great authorities of a primeval age and to give the illusion that they had been handed down without alterations.

[62] Siller, "Zauberspruch und Hexenprozess", 140: "Der Zauberspruch ist bei gleichbleibender Intention einem dauernden Wandel unterworfen. Obwohl man an dem bewährten Wortlaut ("probatum est", fügt die schriftliche Tradition oft dazu), wie an einem technischen Mittel festhält, obwohl also gerade für diese literarische Gattung die Ehrfurcht vor dem einmal geformten Wort typisch ist und das festhalten daran verbindlich ist, befindet sich der einzelne Spruch in einem dauernden Umformungsprozess"; Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 8: "such texts were transmitted from one magician to another without ever being corrected or improved by scholars, and each user was free to modify the text as he or she saw fit..."; M.W. Dickie, "The Learned Magician", in: D.R. Jordan *et alii, The World of Ancient Magic*, 184: "Magicians do make a pretence of observing with scrupulous care what they like to maintain are ancient rituals. In reality, magic is innovative and dynamic."

something to do with the very nature of magic, or at least of the magical charm.

III.3 *From analoga to anaphora: formal applications of analogy*

There is one curious application of analogy which may now lead us to our last issue, the one that was announced above as the formal peculiarities of the formula. To stop a stream of blood you can write the following words, H. 97: *sicycuma, cucuma, ucuma, cuma, uma, ma, a.* A *cucuma* is a cooking kettle. Perhaps the extension of this term in the preceding *sicycuma* refers to *siccus* dry, which may be meaningful. But that is not my point now. What interests us here is the formal technique. One word is repeated but in line after line is robbed of one letter until nothing remains. This is a very popular device. We have several of these formulas in which the gradual decrease in the length of the word itself is the analogon for the desired decline of the illness.[63] The initial term can have a meaning, for instance as a reference to the illness itself: H. 96 *novem glandulae sorores* ("nine tonsils sisters", note that *glandulae* has nine letters). Others, especially often in gemmae, just start from *voces magicae*, for instance the abracadabra-formula. Inherent in this technique is the principle of repetition[64] and this is one of several formal strategies to impart effectiveness to a word or a phrase. We shall now turn to these formal strategies.

III.3.1 *Formal techniques: (asyndetic) cumulation, repetition, variation, rhyme, alliteration*

Even before reading the contents of a spell, a first glance often suggests that we have to do with an incantation. This is due to certain stereotyped and recurrent *formal* characteristics. The most common are repetition, variation, various forms of rhyme or alliteration, parallelization by opposites etc. I give an example: the famous charm handed down by Varro *RR* 55:[65]

> *terra pestem teneto, salus hic maneto in meis pedibus* ("the earth must keep the pestilence, health must remain here in my feet").

Albeit on a primitive level, there is parallelism in metrum, there is

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[63] Discussed among others by Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 116 f.

[64] Often, especially in magical papyri, in combination with certain geometric graphic arrangements in so-called *carmina figurata.* See Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing", 199 ff.; Gordon, in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*, offers a detailed analysis.

[65] See: Tupet, *La magie dans la poésie latine*, 172-4.

rhyme, there is also contrast in meaning. Now, as we all know some of the formal principles applied in these charms are ubiquitous in other areas of especially folk expressions, as for instance nursery rhymes. "Iene miene mutte, tien pond grutte, tien pond kaas, iene miene mutte, ik ben de baas",[66] is a dipping rhyme in my own (Dutch) language. Repetition, for instance, is a fixed technique in both religious and magical expressions, and the instruction to repeat a word or formula two or especially three times is rife. No doubt, repetition or extension of a formula by variation (*albula glandula*)—in more general terms: pleonasm or redundancy—confers emphasis, that is power, to the expression.[67] One says *hagios, hagios, hagios* because *trishagios* is thrice as much as once *hagios*. But, of course, not all has been said with this truism. For even if it would explain one type of these formal devices it does not nearly explain all of them.

Though it is not my intention to go into the formal and prosodic niceties of the formulas I give here a few examples of three very specific devices in both comprehensible and nonsense formulas, all taken from the collections of Heim and Önnerfors (I have latinized the Greek):

1 gemination or trigemination by sheer repetition: *lego soi lego soi—socnon, socnon—sirmio sirmio,*
2 repetition including variation: *vigaria gasaria—lolismus lolistus*,
3 gradual variation from rather simple, mono- or bisyllabic forms to more complicated terms, a particularly popular device, especialy in that the iteration or slight variation of the first two terms is followed by one or more words with a sudden radical change and/or extension: *rica rica soro—kuria kuria kassaria sourorbi—argidam margidam sturgidam* [68]*—crissi crasi concrasi—adam bedam alam betur alam*

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[66] We also have here an instance of the happy alliance between lexically semantic and nonsense words in the formula. For this process in nursery rhymes etc. see: H.A. Winkler, "Die Aleph-Beth-Regel: Eine Beobachtung an sinnlosen Wörtern in Kinderversen, Zaubersprüchen und Verwandtem", in: R. Paret (ed.), *Orientalische Studien Enno Littmann* (Leiden 1935) 1-24.

[67] See Winkler, o.c. preceding note. On gemination or trigemination in ritual see: A.M. di Nola, "La ripetizione mitico-rituale", in, *idem*, *Antropologia religiosa* (Firenze 1974) 91-144; D. Baudy, *Römische Umgangsriten: Eine ethologische Untersuchung der Funktion von Wiederholung für religiöses Verhalten* (Berlin-New York 1998) esp. 21-66. In religious or magical formulas: O. Weinreich, "Trigemination als sakrale Stilform", *SMSR* 4 (1928) 198-206; R. Mehrlein, "Drei", RAC 4 (1959) 269 ff.; Maltomini, "Cristo all' Eufrate", 167-8. As a general linguistic phenomenon: F. Skoda, *Le redoublement expressif: un universal linguistique* (Paris 1982).

[68] An attempt to make sense of this spell by means of etymological engineering: J. Knobloch, "Ein lateinischer Zauberspruch bei Marcellus Empiricus", *Rh.M.* 132 (1989) 408-9.

> *botum—alabanda, alabandi, alambo—saos draos danonos danabios—sarra marra kametrix—baren zaren zartaren sara sarasen—fres refres perfres serperis—asca basca rastaia serc cercer recercel—copiusus coprius coprius coprius copriola—nera nela neria nerella—fix fix fixon.*[69]

I shall be silent on all other sorts of formal devices, for instance anaphora, and now only try to clarify my argument—the basic importance and specific nature of these creative processes—by returning to our observations concerning the text of Cato and the desperate reactions of modern commentators to formulas of this type. H. 75 gives a charm that must be said to a bruise or contusion:

> ἀπολιθώθητι, ἀποξυλώθητι, ἀποκορδυλώθητι (*apolithôthêti, apoxulôthêti, apokordulôthêti*: "turn to stone (petrify), turn to wood, turn to ..... WHAT?)"

For here we have a problem. The first of these three words occurs regularly, the second does occur, but only rarely, the third cannot be found in any dictionary: lexically it does not 'exist'. And this is not the only problem; κορδύλη (*kordule)*, the Greek word from which this verb apparently has been derived, has several meanings, two of which are relevant to our problem. One is 'cudgel, stick'. The second is 'swelling'. In other words, the term *apokordulôthêti* has an ideal double meaning, or at least a double reference, which on the one hand connects it with the first two words of the formula and helps to extend the sequence: "turn to stone, turn to wood, turn to cudgel", on the other with the ailment under discussion, the swelling. There is only one problem for us, but apparently *not* a problem of the author of the formula. If taken in the latter sense *apokordulôthêti* would literally mean: "turn into swelling" = "*become* a swelling", not: "*get rid of* the swelling". But apparently the *mise en série* as such is far more important than lexically correct meanings. "A word... functions within an ongoing context in which rhythm, sound, framework and associations are more important than the word itself".[70] Indeed *if* a word does so far not exist and a person takes the trouble of creating one, he may mean by it anything he may mean by it, he may even mean nothing at all. It is *his* word, he made it in an associative act which can now be clearly recognized as a process of poetics.

For what I am really talking about here appears to be a genuine

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[69] A host of other instances of this trope could be collected from the *defixiones* and magical papyri.

[70] J.H. Blok, *The Early Amazons: modern and ancient perpectives on a persistent myth* (Leiden 1995) 35, following J. Goody, on words in an originally oral context.

instance of poetical freedom[71] and it would do no harm to wonder if this freedom again should not be of some relevance to the magical act. Strangely enough, it has escaped Heim that the very same scheme of this productive process, including the problem of its semantical coherence, returns in another charm quoted by him (H. 106), a charm to prevent inflammation. The great sorceresses Circe and Medea are introduced sitting and facing the orient while searching for the medicine against inflammation εἴτε ἀπὸ λίθου (*eite apo lithou*, "either from stone"), εἴτε ἀπὸ ξύλου (*eite apo xulou*, "or from wood"), εἴτε ἀπὸ κυνοδήκτου (*eite apo kunodêktou*, "or from the dogbitten"). The former two elements refer to the same materials as in the previous charm: they are the material from which the sorceresses hope to extract the healing power. The third word, however, appears to be a free addition, again not equivalent to the other two, and as a matter of fact in this sequence quite out of order. Perhaps not, however, in the logic of the medical act: like *kordulos* of the charm just mentioned it seems rather to refer to the (cause of the) disease itself.[72] The procedure in these two spells displays a marked structural similarity with the so popular, purely formal sequences like *argidam*, *margidam*, *sturgidam* mentioned above.

As it is, our texts bristle with neologisms, new, strange and unknown terms, irrelevancies, and even plain contradictions. All this is partly due to processes of prolific cumulation, variation, rhyme, more generally in the creation of lists.[73] Let us inspect a few striking examples. H. 112: If your horse is in the following condition:

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[71] A comparable swifting between different categories in an Attic *defixio* (Wünsch, *DTA* no. 55) cursing various persons including a soldier: "These persons I do bind in the lead (i.e. on this tablet), in the wax, in the potion, in inactivity, in invisibility, in disgrace, in defeat, in grave monuments...." The materials that must implement the curse are followed by the intended effects, which are again followed by the place where the *defixio* is deposited (in view of the context the latter is more likely than the wish that the cursed person will end up in a grave). Interestingly, Gordon, in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*, shows that, conversely, ancient poetry, when imitating or evoking incantations, may make use of the very same technique that we are here discussing.

[72] Note that the Greek term can indeed refer to an illness or a wound caused by a dogbite: Arist. *HA* 630 a 8. Among the many curses against a potential grave robber in a funerary inscription from Salamis at Cyprus (*SEG* 6 [1932] 802) we read: πρὸς ΚΥΝΑΔΑΚΝΩΝ καὶ ἐχίδνης φυσήματος.

[73] See on listing in different magical contexts: R. Gordon, "'What's in a List?' Listing in Greek and Graeco-Roman Malign Magical Texts", in: D.R. Jordan *et alii*, *The World of Ancient Magic*, 239-277. How very conscious people were of this specifically magical procedure is exemplarily illustrated by the ironic allusion made by Apuleius *Apol.* 64.2, introducing three neologisms in the rhyme words *occursacula ... formidamina ...terriculamenta* in an undisguised parody of a magical malediction. See: V. Hunink, *Apuleius of Madauros Pro se de magia* II (Amsterdam 1997) 169-70.

> *si tortionatus, si hordiatus, si lassatus, si calcatus, si vermigeratus, si vulneratus, si marmoratus, si roboratus, si equus non poterit esse,* ("if suffering from wringing, if pregnant, if deprived of vigour, if trampled upon, if suffering from worms, if wounded, if covered with plaster(?), if made strong (!), if the horse cannot eat"),

one must say the following *carmen* in his right ear:

> "once you were born, once you are healed" (*semel natus, semel remediatus).*

We should not be too surprised if we find only a few of the rhyme-words of the first part of this charm in our dictionaries, must reconstruct others from (hopefully) related terms, can only guess at the meaning of others, and simply find one completely out of order.[74] Again and again this process of poetics involves a creation of new words.

A most illustrative example in this respect is a charm against swollen glands (H. 40):

> Exi, <si>[75] hodie nata, si ante nata,
> si hodie creata, si ante creata,
> hanc pestem, hanc pestilentiam,
> hunc dolorem, hunc tumorem, hunc ruborem,
> has toles, has tosillas,
> hunc panum, has panuclas,
> hanc strumam, hanc strumellam
> hac religione
> evoco, educo, excanto
> de istis membris medullis

Here we have a perfect sample of the creative production of previously non-existent rhyme words, according to the technique illustrated above in the case of *voces magicae.* This time, however, although some of the words (*toles, strumella*) are *hapax legomena*, the meaning can easily be guessed since they are nothing but variations of related, well-known terms (*to[n]silla, struma*). Focussing on the diminutive forms in these pairs of related words Önnerfors comments: "Wie die deminutiva *tosillas, panuclas* und *strumellam* zu beurteilen sind, ist nicht

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[74] Of course, some guesses are more obvious than others. For instance, my guess is that *marmoratus* must have something to do with *marmor* in its sense of 'whitened surface' and *roboratus* with *rubor* in its sense of 'red complexion caused by inflammation'. However, apart from the fact that this would imply a transposition of human symptoms to the domain of hippiatrics, my interest now is not so much in origins as in the textual constitution as it has come down to us, including its logical inconsistencies.

[75] Heim p. 476, n.1 supplemented *si.* Cf. the discussion in Önnerfors, "Zaubersprüche", 119

mit völliger Sicherkeit zu entscheiden …… Wie *pestilentia* im Verhältnis zu *pestis*, heben sie durch den erweiterten Wortumfang den Krankheitsbegriff intensiver vor."

All in all, it appears that we must not expect easy interpretations or explanations of many an unexpected word in our charms. In other words: once more the case is not simple but complicated. Let us complicate matters a bit further.

III.3.2 *Complications*: *the complexity of alienation*

Right in the beginning of our enquiry we saw ourselves confronted with three different, at first sight mutually exclusive interpretations of the enigmatic words in the magical formula in Cato: either they consisted of non-semantic *voces magicae*, or they were derived from a foreign language, or they were corruptions of originally good Latin words and phrases. One problem was that we are rarely able to decide which of the three is correct, another, even more alarming problem is that one gets the impression that the three options may intermingle and coincide in a sheer inextricable way. Moreover, we cannot always decide whether the corruption is the effect of a process of wear, naturally inherent in oral tradition, as an effect of deficient memory for instance, or on the other hand is the result of *conscious or unconscious* strategies of the transmitter. Let us have a closer look at these complications. H. 45 is a Greek spell against the evil eye, which I give in translation except for the word which I am now interested in:

> "Go, νεμεσωθ (*nemesôth*), go out, stay off from the amulet-protected horse, who was born from his own mother, o you evil eye, as far as the earth is separated from heaven".

There are two interesting 'mistakes'. One is a very strange corruption of a normal formula. "Who was born from his own mother" must be a corrruption of—perhaps rather a free variation on—the (originally Egyptian) habit, very common in magical texts, of identifying a person by the name of his mother.[76] But what I am now interested in is

[76] While Graf, in the first version of his book (*La magie dans l'antiquité gréco-romaine* [Paris 1994] 149) still interpreted this strange habit as an *exclusively* magical inversion, he now argues that the *origin* is Egyptian, but that the *application* in magical texts is inspired by the general penchant to magical reversal. (*Magic in the Ancient World*, 128). With reference to the French edition of Graf's book, J.B. Curbera, in an exhaustive paper, "Maternal Lineage in Greek Magical Texts" in: D.R. Jordan *et alii*, *The World of Ancient Magic*, 195-203, esp. 199, once more argues that the habit is derived from Egypt but was adopted in Graeco-Roman magic for reasons of inversion. He also notes that "the magical tendency towards inversion normally does not create new elements, but selects from pre-existing elements." By way of illustration he refers to

the term *nemesoth*. On the basis of parallel evidence, Heim assumed that we should read νεμεσῶ σ' (*nemeso se*), which means "I feel resentment against you". In a letter, Chris Faraone suggests that the original word rather should be *Nemesis*, since most flee formulas follow the pattern of an imperative followed by the name of the affliction.[77] Nemesis is an *alias* of the Evil Eye. However this may be, we are back at the vexed question: is it an error of a late scribe as there are so many? Or was the corruption already fixed in an earlier model? If so, how did it slip into the text, and why was not it unmasked? The question is justified as words ending on *th* do not occur in the Greek language. So the word must have caused at least some uneasiness to a Greek user who knew perfectly well that such a word 'could not exist'. On the other hand, words ending on *th*, especially on *-oth*: (representing a female plural in Hebrew), are very common in, indeed characteristic of, *voces magicae* and the names of gods and demons such as Sabaoth in magical texts. In other words there may have been some temptation if not to wilfully produce, then at least to tolerate the corruption *nemesoth* and perhaps to take it as a divine name.[78]

I do, of course, not deny that variation or corruption is a matter of course in the tradition of *voces magicae*, devoid as they are of a lexical meaning that could succour the preservation of their original morphology. Far more interesting, however, is the process by which a normal meaningful word is turned into a *vox magica*, as we saw it in

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R. Münsterberg, "Zu den attischen Fluchtafeln, *JÖAI* 7 (1904) 141-5, who argues that the magical use of retrograde writing did not originate as an inversion of the normal writing, but was a relic of older Greek writing habits only preserved in magic as a sign of otherness. Using the mother's name, for that matter, is also well attested in early Greek inscriptions. The curse text, that was brilliantly explained by D.R. Jordan, "*CIL* VIII 19525 (B) 2 *QPVVLVA = q(uem) p(eperit) vulva*", *Philologus* 120 (1976) 127-32, (cf. *idem*, "Notes from Carthago", *ZPE* 111 [1996] 121, and *ZPE* 74 [1988] 240, where he mentions two unpublished curse tablets from the Athenian agora with the text: ὃν ἔτεκε μήτρα τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ) demonstrates the common use of the expression as well as its applicability for puns as in our text. Cf. Daniel-Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I p. 155.

[77] Cf. Daniel-Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum* I p.71.

[78] A splendid parallel of this process, which is unmistakably intended, is the 'magical' name that Hermes adopts in one of the so-called Sethianic curse tablets: χθονιθαρχωθ (*chthonitharchôth*) in a *defixio*: (Audollent, *Defixionum tabellae*, no. 18; comparable terms *ibid.* nos. 27, 29-38, all from Cyprus), in which the terms 'ruler' of the 'underworld' can be easily recognized, both, however, augmented with a 'magical' *th.* W. Burkert, "ΘΕΩΝ ΟΠΙΝ ΟΥΚ ΑΛΕΓΟΝΤΕΣ: Götterfurcht und Leumanisches Missverständniss", *MH* 38 (1981) 195-204, esp.204, presents striking examples of perfectly normal modern prayer formulas transformed into sometimes rather weird names of God.

the charm just discussed. Once we are prepared for this possibility, it strikes us that there is an astonishing potential of strategies, either conscious or unconscious, to *create* 'strange words', that are all applied in the magical texts. The instruction to use Greek words or letters in a Latin text or *vice versa* belongs to the most common strategies,[79] as is the use of words from other languages in general.[80] H. 47, a Greek charm, gives the instruction to write a formula against mice: "write ἐξηφορε". Another codex has ἐξιφορε. We can be sure that the user had no idea what it meant and took it to be a *vox magica*. It is however nothing but the Latin expression: *exi foras* ("go away", lit. "go outside"), but written in Greek letters. These words from other languages or words written in foreign letters in the midst of a normal text do come as a surprise and are of course particularly prone to corruption. Here it becomes practically impossible to distinguish between *voces magicae* and corruptions of relatively normal texts, especially if borrowed from another language. There are several instances of heavily corrupted Greek words in Latin texts, which after careful analysis and reconstruction turn out to be perfectly understandable metrical phrases, *inter alia* from Homer. Likewise, H. 528, a spell against worms, very popular in the Middle Ages, revealed its secret only in the 19th century. It appeared to be latinized Hebrew, namely Solomon's Song 6:8:

> *Sisim hemma mulahos usmonim pilagrim velamos einmisspar* ("There are sixty queens and eighty concubines and virgins without number")

I do not know whom to admire more, the scholar who made this discovery or the one[81] who detected in the *verba magica* of an 8th century *Latin* spell AMICO CAPDINOPO ØIØPON ΔPACASIMO the *palindrome* of a *Greek hexameter*: ἀμήσας ἄρδην ὀροφήφορον ἥδρασα σῆμα, ("having reaped I established a lofty-roofed monument"),

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[79] Instances of a variation of *voces magicae* written in Greek and Italic letters in Ö. 21, 22, 26.

[80] Not only in charms from late antiquity, but also, and especially, in medieval spells, where often the instruction is phrased in the vernacular, but the powerful words themselves in the holy language of the church: Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 118; G. Storms, *Anglo-Saxon Magic* (The Hague 1948) counts 86 Anglo-Saxon manuscripts out of which 68 contain Latin formulas. In seventeenth century England this could even result in the insinuation that a prayer in the Latin language actually is a magical charm: K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London 1971) 179.

[81] L.W. Daly, "A Greek Palindrome in Eighth-century England", *AJPh* 103 (1982) 95-97.

clearly derived from a Homeric line (Il. 24.451) but with no transparent connection with the purpose of the spell, namely to stop a bleeding. Indeed, many are the corruptions due to misunderstanding, the original being so concealed that, as Heim sighed, "we need another Oedipus to explain them". However, at the same time he rightly warns us not to think that all these strange formulas *can* be explained. For instance, for the reason—and here I return to a suggestion cautiously introduced above—that there is more to it than mere corruption. For, first, as we already noted before, we often descry a conscious play with a word, and, second, it is not only *foreign* words that tend to be corrupted. Take for instance Ö. 60, quoted above, where we read at the end of a carmen:

> *agyos, aios, ayos, sanctus sanctus sanctus fiat fiat fiat amen.*

It is clear that in the first three words things went wrong because they are taken from another language: Greek ἅγιος. But this hardly explains why *three different words* emerged. Clearly, the distortions are, at least partly, caused by a process of purposive variation. A remarkable example of this process is H. 122, apparently a spell against contusion:

> *si vir est in collo, si mulier in invilico, sicut terra non tangat, ita sanguen viventale tantale vives sanguine tantale.*

I do not translate this, because it is untranslatable: although separate words can be distinguished, the text as a whole presents nonsense. What we do see, however, is a marked drive to repetition, rhyme, alliteration, variation. Perhaps the original was something like:

> *si vir est in collo, si mulier in umbilico, sicut terram non tangunt, ita sanguinem bibunt talem (?) Tantale bibes sanguinem, Tantale,*

in which Tantalus is asked to drink the blood (of the contusion), which, for that matter, is in sheer contradiction to his mythical inability to drink[82] (or eat). But my point is that a meaningful Latin text has been corrupted and rendered unintelligible by a process which cannot be attributed solely to the wear inherent in oral tradition but should rather be viewed as a (poetic) desire—if not compulsiveness—to produce rhyme, repetition and variation.

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[82] In fact we have a spell with the words *Tantale pie, pie Tantale, Tantale pie,* a transcription from Greek: "Drink Tantalus".

In all these cases—and there are many more[83]—we descry the temptation to change a formula in order to make it more 'magical', as we also noticed in the cumulation of *voces magicae*. This is, for instance, obviously the case in H. 66, a not completely comprehensible spell against a disease of the chest. In it we find the formula *ut os ut os ut os*. This must be a corruption and trigemination of *ut hos*, which no doubt was intended to indicate the place where names of other sufferers should be inserted: "just like the following ...", but which obviously developed into a magical formula.[84] Similar processes lie at the root of such corruptions as that of the liturgical formula *hoc est corpus meum* into *hocus pocus* and its extensions in a host of further formulas, in Dutch for instance: *hocus pocus holle bolle bocus* or *hocus pocus pilatus pas/platneus*, etc. etc. What we observe here is that the joy, (or the need), of constructing "poetical" formulas takes its toll over the normal requirements concerning meaning in everyday communication.

A most interesting type, finally, is that a normal and meaningful term is followed by a variant form that does *not* have a lexical meaning but which forms the *trait d'union* with the world of magical terms. A good instance is H. 41:

> *absi absa phereos* (and after some manipulation): *tollo te hinc totam, haemorhoida, absis paphar.*

Absis means "be gone" and in the second formula a magical word *paphar* is added. But in the sequence *absi absa phereos*, *absis* is first deconstructed into the lexically non-existent *absi,* the next step towards 'magicalisation' is the construction of a variant of this word: *absa,* which is followed by a completely different *vox magica*. A medieval spell to induce erotic desire in a woman[85] has: *amet lamet te misael,* in which *amet .. te* means: "may she love you", which however is interrupted by a nonsense rhymeword *lamet.* Comparably, H. 184 has: κυρια κυρια κασσαρια σουρωρβι (*kuria kuria kassaria sourorbi)*, in which the word *kuria*—if intended as a 'normal' word—means "mis-

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[83] Even if we take full account of simple mistakes. In the magical papyri we find many different versions of one formula and sometimes they are quoted one after the other: A. D. Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (ed. Z. Stewart, Oxford 1972) I, 179 f. On different kinds of adaptations in magical papyri see also: Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 175.

[84] Comparable is that meaningful *osia, osia, osia* in one medieval spell, reappears in others as senseless *voces magicae* + *o sy* + *o sy* + *o sya* : Siller, "Zauberspruch und Hexenprozess", 134-5.

[85] R. Kieckhefer, "Erotic Magic in Medieval Europe", in: J.E. Salisbury (ed.), *Sex in the Middle Ages: A book of essays* (New York-London) 30-55, esp. 32.

tress", but the other words are nonsense words.[86] And our texts bristle with such curious mixtures of normal words and their 'deconstructed' variants obviously deployed as magical words.[87] Let me just finish by quoting two most interesting ones belonging to a whole series, taken from an ancient textbook on horse breeding, H. 210 and 211:

> αμιλι χαμουρουατο σακμαδαν εὐπρεπέστατε δαπνουνη, βαθυαρουεζε μαντεστιν εὐπρεπε, καὶ σεμναλεουθ

> Ὸ υιου ατιουρουανα καὶ τῶν ευπρεταβενε μαλχα πιουνιβα καὶ αχιματατια

For the major part, both spells consist of *voces magicae* but they also contain lexically correct Greek words: καί (*kai*, "and") and εὐπρεπέστατε (*euprepestate,* "o most becoming one"). Heim grants these two words an accent, therewith acknowledging their lexical existence. He does not do the same[88] with the words εὐπρεπε (*euprepe)* and υιου (*[h]uiou*), although they closely resemble normal words: *euprepe* misses only one letter to make it the vocative of the word of which *euprepestate* is the superlative. In the second formula we have in the word ευπρεταβενε (*eupretabene*) an even worse 'corruption' of the same term. Hence, these two texts illustrate how abnormal and normal words may intermingle, and in such a way that a form of address taken from normal communication—here and elsewhere in *logoi* of *voces magices* vocative forms abound—continually lingers on the brink of normal and abnormal language, leaving the reader or user with the problem where exactly the world of the addressed person, demon or god must be sought. They also provide an additional illustration of how normal words under the influence of their 'magical' context may gradually change into 'abnormal' words. Our texts betray various different

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[86] Of course also in other types of magical texts, e.g. Daniel-Maltomini, I, no. 45, p.165: βαλεω (at least suggesting 'normal' Greek) βολβεω (not an existing Greek word, but not impossible in Greek) βολβεωχ (impossible in Greek) βολβεσρω υυφθω.

[87] Note that it is not necessary to add *in*comprehensible words to 'magicalize' a text. This can also be done by lexically existing, but (to quote Pliny) "unexpected words" such as for instance *crocodile* in a text mentioned earlier or the interesting case in H. 48, ἐκτείνει περικεφαλαία βύρσα, ἐκτός, ἐκτός, νόσ[ος], συγχεῖ πώγων ἡίθεος ἡμίθεος, which perhaps means: "(the patient?) stretches out the skin of his head, (and says): out, out, illness, the beard of a young men, of a demigod, demolishes you". I guess that ἡμίθεος is just a free addition to and variation of the foregoing ἡίθεος in order to make the spell more persuasive.

[88] As he had not done in the case of *kuria* in the preceding spell. Quite correctly, in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom* Gordon, while discussing the *Ephesia grammata* quoted above pp. 113-14, wonders whence these accents ("those satisfying marks of phonetic orthodoxy") were derived.

stages of this process.[89] For both these reasons these texts will be of immediate relevance to our final section.

IV *Some inferences and suggestions*

We have discussed three different strategies most typical of the magical charm. Two famous lines of *voces magicae* in Cato served as an overture to a survey of strange 'magical' words and names, and in the end our discussion of one of the central features of the charm, namely the formal techniques, led us back again to these *voces magicae*. In this respect our most important conclusion concerns the relevance of the search for origins. The question whether the *voces* were meaningless sounds right from the beginning, or were either relics from foreign languages or corruptions from perfectly normal language, has lost most of its interest for our present issue.[90] Not only have we seen that all three processes regularly did occur, but—far more important—our texts display a propensity verging on obsession to create abnormal words (*voces magicae*), *irrespective of the point of departure*.[91] Even if a

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[89] Here are a few more: Ö. 33: *Has preces dices: Horner laxi abcol fecesitias et ior dodienlaecaon utus celi libera*, in which at least *et* and *celi* (if identical to classical Latin *caeli*) and especially *libera* ("make free")—while another codex adds *virtus* instead of *utus*—can be recognized as normal words in the midst of the mass of nonsense words, which however *at first sight* would give the impression of orthodox language. Ö. 47, *alotamentum sedraoton terfice isfinias nereta despone permofinet ment, hec mihi et Platoni in usum erat,* of which the final part is perfectly understandable: "this was of help to both me and Plato", but in the spell itself one continually doubts whether we have normal words or not. Cf. also: J. Stannard, "Greco-Roman materia medica in medieval Germany", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 46 (1972) 467. In such formulas the formal similarity of the magical formula and Jabberwocky becomes apparent.

[90] In other words, the question as posed by K-Th. Zaurich, "Abrakadabra oder Ägyptisch? Versuch über einen Zauberspruch", *Enchorion* 13 (1985) 119-32, is interesting from the perspective of origins (here: Egyptian) but not with respect to its meaning for later users, who had no inkling about origins or original meaning. The same is still true when it can be demonstrated that a seemingly 'senseless' string of untransparent *voces magicae* actually consists of originally Egyptian names or epithets of gods, while, in addition, the total number of letters of that string is 24, as in a magical papyrus published by R.W. Daniel: "P.Mich.inv. 6666 Magic", *ZPE* 50 (1983) 147-154, and also in the latinized versions of Hebrew and Greek expressions. L.W. Daly, "A Greek Palindrome", 95, asks just the right question: "When a scribe copies Greek in an England that understands no Greek, is there any comprehension?" and gives just the right answer, namely that in this case "there would be only the scribe's comprehension that he is copying magic and spells."

[91] Moreover, it is not necessary at all to assume that one single charm must have been the standard and that all variations from that text were somehow corruptions of one kind or another. Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 125 n.21, makes a productive use of Lord's concept of 'multiformity' (A. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* [Cambridge 1960] 119-20) for the understanding of so-called 'variants' of charms.

formula originated in normal and comprehensible language, a sometimes demonstrably deliberate process of deconstruction soon took its toll. What we see, in other words, is a *marked drive to alienation*. In quite a different way from what philologists usually understand by it, we conclude that in the magical formula often the *lectio difficilior* is indeed *melior*: the more difficult, aberrant, the less 'normal' a reading, the better it seemed in the eyes of the author, transmitter or user of the charm. This means that the focus of our interest has now definitely shifted from problems of origin towards problems of meaning. We are back at our initial question: what is the meaning of the lack of meaning?

If we ask Pliny, we learn from a passage quoted above that *externa verba atque ineffabilia* (foreign and inexpressible words) carry the expectation of something 'immense'. Why? Various different but not mutually exclusive answers are conceivable. Inspired by the literary theorist Todorov,[92] R. Gordon[93] emphasizes the narrative aspects of charms, comparing them with cooking recipes. To this end they must establish rôles, actions and predicates. The basic rôles or participants are the practitioner/magician, the patient/client and the object (the disease). A mediator (spiritual power) may be the fourth rôle. The relations between these rôles are of an authoritative nature. Through the act of addressing the disease the practitioner actually addresses the patient, likewise convincing him of his authority, which is established by his command of specific, effective knowledge, among other things his knowledge of effective words: the peculiar words called *voces magicae*.[94] Depending on the intended addressee, the utterances serve two different goals: "The address operates on two levels. As a locution to an inanimate object (the disease), it marks a non-standard social event requiring special interpretation. As an address in the second person with the deployment of a specific name (the client) it acts as a sign of the inclusion of the named within a quasi social context".

Accordingly, Gordon pays much attention to the specifically rhetorical and persuasive functions of words, expressions and formulas. The creation of foreign or new words, including the *voces magicae*, is

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[92] Especially T. Todorov, "Le discours de la magie", *L'Homme* 13 (1973) 38-65 = *idem*, *Les genres du discours* (Paris 1978) 246-82.

[93] Gordon, "The Healing Event".

[94] F. Graf, "Prayer in Magic and Religious Ritual", in: Faraone & Obbink, *Magika Hiera,* 188-213, esp. 190-5, in some respects, concurs with this, but he focuses his interpretation rather on the relationship between magician and deity. One function of the *voces magicae* is that of normal prayer: to express all potential names (= the sphere of the god's activities), to 'please' the god. The other, more specific one, is to "claim a special relationship with the god, based on revealed knowledge" (192).

explained as a strategy that enables the practitioner to play his rôle and demonstrate his superior command of esoteric knowledge. It is "one among several means of marking the special status of the utterance, designating the power relation which the charm sets up between practitioner and object". By their very secrecy these words give access to a wide applicability. "As utterances, in which the *signifiant* has almost completely if not entirely overwhelmed the *signifié* they are semantic holes which can be filled by the practitioner by means of any of a number of recuperative theories". I must resist the temptation to quote these revealing interpretations more extensively. What I am going to suggest, then, is by no means an alternative interpretation, since I generally accept Gordon's ideas, but an additional view of the strategies of magical formulas. In order to do so I make a few preliminary remarks.

The theory just mentioned may be called functionalistic in so far as it focusses on the function(s) of the ritual use of *voces magicae* in order to establish specific forms of social relationship including a position of authority for one of the participants. There are however other approaches conceivable that may add their own value to the spectrum of possible interpretations. To my mind one of the real dangers that challenge our study is the categorical rejection and denunciation of all former (or other) paradigms in defence of a monolithical glorification of one's own.[95] In short, our study is polyparadigmatic.

Moreover, there is a more specific complication. The charms that constitute our primary material do not satisfy the social conditions that require an authoritative magician (as do for instance the incantations of the extensive and very complicated magical papyri) and hence seem to resist at least this type of functionalistic interpretation. Generally, our charms do *not* presuppose a magician's help. They are instructions for domestic use "Hausmittel",[96] but nonetheless display

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[95] I have argued this *in extenso* in the Introduction of my *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (*Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion* II, Leiden), 1-14, and tried to substantiate this argument throughout the book. In his magisterial "Aelian's Peony: the location of magic in Graeco-Roman tradition", *Comparative Criticism* 9 (1987) 59-95, though again arguing from a predominantly social point of view, Gordon has much that points in the direction of my argument.

[96] Of course, there are exceptions. The magical treatment of the luxation described by Cato was evidently a collective ritual. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 45: "The ritual has a theatrical and also a collective aspect; it unfolds, I think, in front of three categories of persons, the ailing person, the healers, and the (family) community." However, generally "charms are unique in that performance is typically private; the audience is often only one person—someone sick, injured, anxious ..." (Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 134). Accordingly, "we need to ask why so many of the charms reported by Marcellus, for example, are for self-help by the patient." (Gordon, "The Healing Event", 365)

a broad range of *voces magicae*.[97] And finally, even if we restrict ourselves to the *voces magicae* as markers of a special status of the utterance—expressing the specificity of the situation—, this approach, though explaining the social *function* of meaningless sounds, does not explain the *meaning* of meaninglessness. Confronted with this problem scholars of an earlier generation used to refer to the mysteries hidden in nonsense words, references to the uncanny, as required for evoking a magical atmosphere. Again, I am not denying this when I yet make an attempt to advance our understanding in a slightly different direction.

By way of aperture I would like to draw attention to a feature that I have not mentioned so far: the very frequent instruction to write a magical spell with the left hand, or to write it reversely from right to left, or with letters turned upside down etc.[98] Though far more current in curse texts, similar devices are not lacking in other magical texts either. Many a spell seemed to consist of meaningless *voces* until someone got the idea to read them from right to left and discovered a perfectly transparent text. How to explain this? Once more, various suggestions have been proposed: a desire for secrecy, for instance, or the wish that the words or works of an opponent may end up as reversely as the letters of a curse. Indeed, this is sometimes explicitly expressed in *defixiones*. However, this may be true enough for curse texts, but there is not really much need for using your left hand for writing or acting in the context of the magical charm. So, again, what may be true for one type of magical text, need not be equally helpful for another. If we now start by simply noting what we see, the most obvious observation is that we have here an act that is exactly the reverse of normal behaviour. It is 'abnormal' and belongs to a reversed world.

And let us now also consider the *voces magicae* from this angle. What sense is there in their employment? Here the ancients themselves can

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[97] They occur in about 16% of the charms collected by Heim, but there are many more if one includes 'unintelligible' texts which do not give the impression of having been *intended* as *voces magicae*. In the collection of Önnerfors, I count 25 incomprehensible texts in 60 charms, and in medieval charms *voces magicae* or nonsense words are *very* common.

[98] The prescription that a name should be written with inverted letters, e.g. Heim p. 556: *scribe... nomen ipsius inversis litteris*, or from right to left or with the left hand or alternatively with right or left hand (H. 221, 222). Cf. also the *very* common instruction to handle the *materia medica* with the left hand. The latter instructions prove that the practices of writing from right to left or giving the mother's name as an indication of lineage, may be relics of older normal practice (see below), but should certainly no less be considered as expressions of the inversed world of magic.

put us on the right track. It appears that Pliny's predicates *externa* (foreign) and *ineffabilia* (inexpressible) represent a common ancient typology: the *voces magicae* are referred to with the following predicates: they are ἄσημα (*asema*),[99] ἄτοπα (*atopa*)[100] and βάρβαρα (*barbara*).[101] And here at last we are in the centre of things. *Asema* means "without meaning, unintelligible", *atopa* literally means "out of place" and acquires the meaning "strange, paradoxical", and further: "unnatural". *Barbara* means barbara, that is barbarous, referring to a foreign world. So, according to ancient interpreters the *voces magicae* have no meaning of their own, they do not refer to particular objects or concepts, but they do refer to a world. This, however, is not our own world but a radically different one. There are many different ways to express this notion inherent in the *voces magicae*. Patricia Cox Miller[102] suggests that the use of vowels and *voces magicae* was intended to transcend not only writing but speech itself. Now the idea of *transcending* language is perhaps the most eloquent way of expressing the departure from our normality to another, 'transcendent', reality. With respect to the aspect of reversal, Jonathan Z. Smith has analysed the late antique cultural tendency, essential to Gnosticism, to transcend this world through inverting its categories.[103] Gordon explains the distinctive function of using reversed script and other devices as an indication of the difference between communicative models in the two worlds, dominant and heteromorphous.[104] But the

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[99] Lucian. *Menip.* 9; Iamblich. *De myst. Aeg.* 7,4.

[100] Plut. *De superst.* 3.

[101] In the texts mentioned in the foregoing notes and numerous other ones. Discussion of the term: Martinez, *A Greek Love Charm from Egypt* , 35 f.

[102] P. Cox Miller, "In Praise of Nonsense", in: A.H. Armstrong (ed.), *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality: Egyptian, Greek, Roman* (New York 1986) 481-505.

[103] J.Z. Smith, *Map is not Territory* (Leiden 1978) 147-71; cf. Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing", 217 n.85.

[104] Gordon, "Aelian's Peony", and also in a magnificent chapter on the 'Subversion of Script' in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*. However, he does so primarily, it seems, in order to underline the special position of the magician or the special status of the magical act ("If normal orthography was the instrument of dominant, legitimate authority, pseudo-paragraphia signified the character of the discourse of magic in the eyes of those who employed it: outsider, outcast, outlandish."), rather than the specificity of the potential of the other world as a source of power. Cf. his views on new formal devices as being necessary for magical practice: "to affirm itself as a distinctive set of procedures in relation to the real world. It was thus ever on the look out for new ways of representing and imagining its own distinctiveness." In sum, Gordon sees these strategies of exploiting anomalies as principally intended to construct the self-representation of magic/magician to "represent its heteromorphous character". Cf. also Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* , in the section "Magic and Reversal", 229-233. For the concept of the liminal as the stage for magical activity see also: S.I. Johnston, "Crossroads", *ZPE* 88 (1991) 217-24.

following view deserves some consideration as well. *Voces magicae*, being semantically vacant, can be applied (or interpreted) on more than one level and in different functions. One is, I would suggest, that of 'open-ended' performative utterances. Normally, performative enunciations are expressions that are equivalent to action:[105] the verb itself is the accomplishment of the action which it signifies. Since the *voces* have *no communicable* meaning, however, they cannot denote one explicit—and consequently restricted—course of action, but give voice to a choice of imaginable (or perhaps rather *un*imaginable) avenues towards the desired effect.[106]

In whatever way you phrase it, the conclusion is that the specificity of *voces magicae* and other anomalous expressions conveys them a special function of passwords that take us literally "out of our place" into a different world, where paradox reigns, where you write with your left hand or from right to left, where you do not identify yourself with the name of your father but with that of your mother: in short a reversed reality, the world of abnormality, the world of otherness.[107] This world can be identified with foreign countries, especially those marked by ancient wisdom, or the land of barbarians, who even derive their name from talking a language that sounds like *rabarabar*. As we saw, the *voces magicae* are marked by combinations of vowels and consonants foreign to Greek or Latin languages and the word

[105] "Jesus heals you now", "be gone", "I conjure you ", "I swear it". The notion of performative expression was developed by J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, (2nd ed. edited by J.O. Urmson & M. Sbisà, Cambridge Mass. 1975), and exploited for anthropological issues, especially magic, by: S.J. Tambiah: "The Magical Power of Words", *Man* 3 (1968) 175-208. Cf. *idem*, "Form and Meaning of Magical Acts: a point of view", in: R. Horton & R. Finnegan (eds.), *Modes of Thought: essays on thinking in Western and Eastern societies* (London 1973) 199-229. Both in: *idem*, *Culture, Thought, and Social Action* (Cambridge Mass.-London 1985) 17-59; 60-86, where see also: "A Performative Approach to Ritual" 123-166. For the discussion of this notion and further literature see: Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion", 196 n.32; Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 206 ff. Cf. Gordon, "'What's in a List?", 239 f.

[106] This suggestion of 'open-ended' performative utterance seems to be exactly the reverse of poetry imitating the magical incantation. Analysing Sappho's celebrated prayer to Aphrodite, Ch. Segal, "Eros and Incantation: Sappho and oral poetry", *Arethusa* 7 (1974) 154, concluded: "the incantatory element is already a latent metaphor". More recently Th. Greene, *Poésie et magie* (Paris 1991), 50-2, qualifies Sappho's incantatory poem as "pseudo-performatif: c'est un acte de langage imaginaire, où la voix de la locutrice a priorité sur le prétendu but téléologique".

[107] For this interpretation *vide supra* nn. 76 and 98. After the completion of the present paper I saw that S. Greenwood, *Magic, Witchcraft and the Otherworld* (Oxford 2000), argues exactly the same for modern magic as practised by contemporary Pagans in Britain. They consider communication with an otherworldly reality to be the essence of magic, and the author argues that the otherworld forms a central defining characteristic of magical practice.

barbara in a number of variations is very popular in the magical formulas.

Now, what do we *know* of the Greek and Roman concepts and connotations of this imaginary world of 'otherness', be it a distant barbarian country, or a utopian/dustopian never-never-land, or a precultural mythical abode in the beginning, or an eschatological one in the end of time? Several things but one most of all: it is essentially ambiguous—threatening or ridiculous on one hand, promising and imbued with abnormal power on the other. To use Pliny's words, it is *both* meaningless and immense. The flood of recent studies in 'otherness' have greatly advanced our understanding of these often paradoxical traits. Otherness exists in gradations, from a complete opposition to normality in a radically reversed world to a mixture of normal and abnormal signs as we find them for instance in Herodotus' largely imaginary descriptions of foreign barbarous countries. Whatever their form, their lack of normal contours and their ambiguous nature make them the very places of creation.[108] And—so I now suggest—it is this extraordinary creative potential to which the magical charm appeals. Though it is no doubt true that uttering sounds like *borroborrobor* does help to isolate the magical performance from normality, to emphasize its specificity, it is also true that locking off one side here involves an opening to another. If the magical formula helps to give access to the special creative potential embedded in the world of otherness, then the magical act itself is an act of creation,[109] evoking means that make what is normally impossible magically (that is abnormally) possible. Hence I propose to interpret the drive to alienation, one of the central marks of magic, as such an appeal to creative forces not available in the normal world.

So far we have been considering the first main theme, introduced in the first section of chapter III and to which we returned in the third section, the *voces magicae*. However, side by side with alienation we have also discussed another strategy. The second section of chap-

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[108] As for instance Mircea Eliade and Victor Turner have argued for the different worlds *in illo tempore* and of the interstitial periods, respectively. I have investigated the ambiguity of 'otherness', especially in its 'pre-cultural' and 'interstitial' aspects in *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (*Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion* II, Leiden), esp. in Ch. 2, on the myth and ritual of the god Kronos. In the same chapter the interested reader will find references to the literature of 'otherness' (pp. 106-9).

[109] In the first version of this paper I was not aware that B. Malinowski, *The Language of Magic and Gardening* (London 1966) 238, already spoke of the "creative metaphor of magic". Thanks to a suggestion of Chris Faraone, I have learned this from M.Z. Rosaldo, "It's All Uphill: The creative metaphors of Ilongot magical spells", in: M. Sanches and B.G. Blount (eds.), *Sociocultural Dimensions of Language Use* (New York etc. 1975) 177-203.

ter III concerned the deployment of 'normal'—by which I mean at least lexically transparent—words and expressions that refer to analogies in the realm of nature or in the cultural, including the mythical, heritage. Does this, then, not contradict our earlier supposition? This question can be answered on different levels. First, magic is not a monolithic or mono-strategical art. It may appeal to a number of different instruments and resources. One of them is the general corpus of knowledge stored in the world of nature, culture and religion. The technique involved, especially comparison, simile, metaphor, is called parallelization by Todorov.[110] One of its major objectives is, in the words of Gordon,[111] to serve "the insertion of a present contingency (the ailment or its healing) into the context of natural law or regularity (.....) The lesion or illness has destroyed an aspect of that order, which the healing event seeks to re-establish partly by the use of naturally powerful similes, partly by the construction of a special kind of social situation". Comparably, references to traditional similes from the great literary works or religious tradition "establish the (imputed) past as a normative parallel to a present instance". Together, these strategies also "assert the practitioner's familiarity with a world enruled".

In the context of medical prescription, this is an obvious and convincing explanation of the use of a certain type of simile or metaphor. The model serves as an authoritative instruction to the illness 'how to behave'. It is the 'just so' relationship between model and imitator.[112] And we may expect that 'just so' comparisons by their very nature refer to 'normal', natural, or at least comprehensible models.[113] Just as the wolf devours and drinks, so let my indigestion be healed. Just as the woman with bleedings was healed by Jesus, so let my bleeding stop. However, once more, we must note that things are just a bit more complicated. For how 'normal' or 'natural' *are* these references?

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[110] T. Todorov, *Les genres du discours* (Paris 1978).

[111] Gordon, "The Healing Event", 370.

[112] On this analogical function of the simile as a 'declarative utterance' see: Frankfurter, "Narrating Power".

[113] This is the kind of "creativeness" meant by Malinowski and Rosaldo in the works mentioned *supra* n.109. The magical spells of the peoples they study generally do refer to attributes of the experienced world, which serve as models for the spell's desired outcome. "But the "power" of the spell as a whole depends less on the originality or uniqueness of these expressions than on the way in which they work together." Differences in types of metaphor or similes are of course culturally determined: Coptic curses excel in animal analogies of a distinctly everyday nature, which has been explained as a relic of the common use of animals in Egyptian folklore to articulate human character (Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power*, 149).

Once having asked this question it immediately strikes the eye that even within this category the majority of the references do *not* belong to the cultural centre of everyday experience, but to the realm of the extraordinary, the marginal and the exterior. This is obvious for the animals included in the special category of the *adunata*, but apart from that category we find the following animals in the collection of Heim: spider, crocodile, sea-animals, bear, lion, dolphin, lizard, viper, and an occasional hare. For the rest (dead) dogs and (wild) wolves have pride of place. Apart from the dogs (generally associated with magic)[114] all these species belong to the world of the wild, the domain outside the centre of culture as, of course, do the majority of the medicinal or magical plants or roots, which, as a rule are not to be collected in one's backyard either. What I mean is this: while it is true that some magical vehicles in our charms (especially the *voces magicae*) refer to the marvelous potential of a radically different 'other world', and others refer to nature,[115] even the ones belonging to the latter

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[114] Cf. the dog sacrifice to Hekate. On the ambivalent status of the dog both inside and outside human culture, see: J.M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: the tragedy of Hector* (Chicago-London 1975) 193-202. Wolves, on the other hand, though of course belonging to the world of outer nature, have a share in men's world as well since it is the animal par excellence into which men may change for a short period, especially during initiation. See: R. Buxton, "Wolves and Werewolves in Greek Thought", in: J.N. Bremmer (ed.), *Interpretations in Greek Mythology* (London 1987) 60-79; H.S. Versnel, *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual* (*Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion* II, Leiden 1993) 315 n.89; 330-2. On wolves as cultural models for human social processes in Longus, see: St.J. Epstein, "Longus' Werewolves", *Classical Philology* 90 (1995) 58-73. On the lizard, no less popular in magic, see: A.D. Nock, "The Lizard in Magic and Religion", in: *Essays on Religion and the Classical World* (ed. Z. Stewart, Oxford 1972) I, 271-6.

[115] Of course, these two domains cannot be strictly distinguished or separated: they are like extremes on a continuous scale. For that matter, I do not deny the existence nor underrate the importance of 'natural' or 'folk' medicine as for instance deployed by root-cutters, discussed by G.E.R. Lloyd, *Science, Folklore and Ideology* (Cambridge 1983) 119-49. In the words of P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago 1982) 114: "We must accept the medical pluralism of an ancient society", illustrating this with an instance of modern Morocco where people make a distinction between illnesses for the hospital and illnesses for the *fqih* and the Saint", thus suggesting a differentiation between horizontal and vertical models of healing. Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, 1 ff. and "Erotic Magic in Medieval Europe", 36, makes a distinction within the boundaries of medieval magic between 'natural' and 'demonic' magic. This medical pluralism opens the possibility, if one does not work, to try another. The argument that a patient was given up by the doctors is standard in the records of ancient (and modern) miracle cures: O. Weinreich, *Antike Heilungswunder* (Giessen 1909=Berlin 1969). But if the appeal to divine help does not yield effect you can try magic: John Chrysostom preached against women who use magic when their children are sick rather than using the one true Christian remedy, the sign of the cross: "Christ is cast out, and a drunken and silly old woman is brought in" (*Hom.* 8 on Colossians, quoted by Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, 39).

category are not always so naturally natural either. The magical or medical ingredients are not self-evident, should be collected in marginal places (on the top of a hill), with the help of abnormal means (while uttering a spell, or using the left hand), at abnormal times (in the middle of the night, at dawn or sunset) and often through the intermediary of eccentric persons (wise women). Even here, then, though not in the same sense as in the *voces magicae*, we are in (another) world 'out there',[116] in the fringes of the known world, belonging to the category of *spatial liminality*.

I believe this idea finds support too in the popularity of two types of *adunata* in the magical charm. One refers to things that can*not* happen in nature: "just as a mule does not propagate, a cock drinks but does not urinate, an ant has no blood, so let my sickness disappear". The other represents them as (for once) *having* happened: "Shepherds found you, collected you without hands, cooked you without fire, ate you without teeth". Both, however, unequivocally refer to the *non*-normal, to the striking exception, i.e. to the 'otherness' of the model, even if *e contrario* they set an example of how the illness should behave.[117]

Now, very much the same can be said of the *historiolae* that are based on mythical models, for two reasons. First, they display an (understandable) preference for the marvelous: miracle stories have pride of place in the similes used in charms. But this is just another way of saying that once again there is an emphasis on the exceptional: the narrative opens perspectives to a different world—or a

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[116] Gordon, "Aelian's Peony", one of the best—but strangely ignored—studies on the position of ancient magic, has already pointed out the basic ambiguity of magic, being the vehicle between the normal world and the other. So he does in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*, with an emphasis on the magical *substance*, for instance a plant, which by the 'magical' manipulation "enters a new register: it ceases to be what it actually is, a constituent of the natural world. It acquires a charged and dangerous status, entering a different system of rules, meanings and expectations." That is exactly what I have in mind.

[117] In Egyptian magic lists of *adunata* may serve to disqualify a demon or an illness as being "not part of the ordered world and according to its principles shall not exist at all": J. Podeman Sørensen, "The Argument in Ancient Egyptian Magical Formulae", 14, citing as an example: "who runs without a neck, who dances without hair, who hastens without any business, who comes to copulate without a phallus, who comes to bite without teeth...". (P.Geneva Rto. col. III,7-IV,1), very comparable with the *adunaton* in our text. These instances and many more just contradict Gordon's argument ("The Healing Event", 368) that the implied purpose is to evoke the *natural* rule, since anomalous behaviour or qualities *in some species of animals* (mules who do not propagate etc.), albeit exceptions, still belong to the order of nature. Moreover, if so, why all the efforts of seeking or inventing striking *adunata* or anomalies and not directly refer to the obviously natural?

different section of our world—, where just as in the other areas mentioned things can happen that normally are not possible. The second (closely related) reason is that this mythical world is different in another sense as well: it is the world of *temporal liminality*, the world for which Mircea Eliade coined the term *in illo tempore*, to which magical spells of many different cultures have recourse.[118] Thus, we see that, on the axes of both space and time the similes and *historiolae* converge to the same domain of liminality that was most explicitly evoked by the *voces magicae*.

However, not only the specific *contents* of the similes in our texts, but also their general *function* may be of relevance here. We have met many types of similes, metaphors and comparisons in the magical charms, for instance parallelisms created by the patients or practitioners themselves or analogies which have *some* relationship with the issue of the cure but in such vague terms of synecdoche or metonymy or even so paradoxical and illogical that in these cases at least the notion of 'authoritative model' is not the first that comes to mind. Last but not least we have detected a most astonishing freedom if not arbitrariness in choice, adaptation, exchange and new creation of analogies and comparisons. Moreover, we observed that the *logical relevance* of a particular comparison is *not* always the most important consideration. What *is* seminal is the desire to insert the illness or the cure into a series, the *mise en série*. All in all it has become evident that the proliferation of new and often singular formulas is an essential trait of the magical charm. This gave us occasion to wonder if this proliferation of new similes, being a process of creativity, might not have something to do with the very nature of the magical charm.

Recently, magical formulas have often been analysed for their linguistic and stylistic techniques and it was especially the anthropologist Tambiah who has investigated the rhetoric of persuasion of the magical act. I now suggest that besides rhetoric another concept (or an important sub-division of rhetoric) is at least as relevant. I mean the *poetics* of magical formulas. For, in fact, what we have seen is poetics

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[118] See above all: M. Eliade, "Magic and the Prestige of Origins", in: *idem*, *Myth and Reality* (New York 1963) 21-38. Important in this respect, especially on Egyptian and Coptic *historiolae* and their meaning: Frankfurter, "Narrating Power", who summarizes Van der Leeuw's and Eliade's interpretations as "the performative transmission of power from a mythic realm articulated in narrative to the human present ..... Mythic episodes are *continually* powerful." However, he qualifies their functions, partly in Malinowski's track, as that of 'precedence' or 'paradigm', qualifying its goal as 'active analogizing', partly in the wake of Tambiah and others, viewing the *historiola* as a performative utterance.

in action. Free association, the use of similes, metaphors, analogies, metonymy, synecdoche, they are all basic poetical strategies, in fact, they are the stuff poetry is made of.[119] If this is so, it may be relevant to ask what functions are performed by such tropes as metaphor and simile in poetry. Here we need, of course, the help of specialists in literary theory, rhetoric and stylistic, which I am not. But I do feel that when Hector, on his appearance in the battlefield, is compared with "a raving forest fire in the mountains", let alone "a snowy mountaintop", this analogon is not primarily intended as an authoritative model "to put a present contingency into the context of natural law or regularity". Many are the functions of simile, metaphor and metonymy but one of the most obvious is *not* to *include* Hector in a natural regularity, but—exactly the reverse—to *exlude* him from his natural (social) world, to stage him in the spotlight and to say something about him in a plastic, expressive and evocative way which raises him from the ordinary to the extraordinary.[120]

Furthermore, metaphors and similes offer the attraction of polysemy:[121] Hector may be as raving as the fire, but also as threatening, as tempestuous or everything together.[122] So one of the simile's

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[119] On the functions of these tropes (often referred to as "the play of tropes" or "polytropy") as providers of imaginative potentialities in poetic language, see for instance: P. Friedrich, *Language, Context, and the Imagination: Essays by Paul Friedman* (edited by A. S. Dil, Stanford 1979). Metaphor and simile are of course closely related. N. Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis 1968) 77-8: "Instead of metaphor reducing to simile, simile reduces to metaphor, or rather the difference between simile and metaphor is negligeable", quoted by L. Muellner, "The Simile of the Cranes and Pygmies: A study of Homeric metaphor", *HSCP* 93 (1990) 59-101. A. Seppili, *Poesia e magia* (Turin 1971) 316, in a discussion of "la metafora e la similitudine" calls them the "più importanti figure poetiche."

[120] Which, of course, does not imply that the similes themselves need to refer to unnatural or irregular events. G.E.R. Lloyd, *Polarity and Analogy* (Cambridge 1966) 189, stresses the constancy of the world in the similes (as for instance in the consistency of animal behaviour) as against its accessibility to experience. Long before him, H. Fränkel, *Die homerischen Gleichnisse* (Göttingen 1921) 72-3, had argued the same. Nor does it deny that similes are often traditional. Like *historiolae* in magical spells they may have a long history. See for both: L. Muellner, o.c. preceding note.

[121] I. L. Pfeijfer, *Three Aeginetan Odes of Pindar* (Diss. Leiden 1996), 23-4, singles out metaphor as one special instance of the notion of 'implicitness', which "grants the hearer the pleasure of finding out himself how things cohere", but may also "result in polyinterpretability (...) leaving the door open for multiple relevance." A.B. Weiner, "From Words to Objects to Magic: hard words and the boundaries of social interaction", *Man* 18 (1983) 690-709, esp. 698: "the use of metaphors widens the range of possible associations". Cf. Tambiah, "The Magical Power of Words".

[122] Olsan, "Latin Charms of Medieval England", 131, makes just this point in connection with the polyreferentiability of Christain charms, speaking of a "constellation of associations such as: Job [who is always invoked against worms], suffered this way, loved God, was loved of God; Job, as a Holy Man, has power from God and as a Holy Man dispenses that power to those in need...."

contributions to the locution is polysemy, its wealth of potential references. It opens perspectives which had not been available before the comparison, and by revealing a choice of different new aspects it entails a change in the quality of the subject, in the context of charms either that of the patient or that of the illness. The comparison makes the patient's perspective different from what it was before because it invests it with a new potential of unexpected qualities. Recent theories even claim that metaphors mould a radically new entity from the combination of the two components in the comparison.[123]

This, then, is by and large what I had in mind when speaking of the creative potential of the magical charm. It is as if the inventiveness of each user and transmitter, his personal capacity to add, transform, adapt and create similes and their applications, is a reflection of the small margins of—and the desire to expand—his power to influence things. His personal manipulation of expressive language has a resonance in the expected effects of the healing event. Both are creational processes, one within the power of man—of each individual man provided he is in possession of the necessary instruments—and one beyond his power, but perhaps liable to influences through magical charms. Seen in this light, both frames of reference that we discussed: the world of abnormality—to which the *voces magicae* refer—, and the domain of nature, culture and religion, are put into action in such a way that *new qualities* become available.[124] These qualities lie in the domain of and are produced by genuine acts of creation. And one

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[123] C. Bicchieri, "Should a Scientist Abstain from Metaphor?", in: A. Klamer *et alii* (eds.), *The Consequences of Economic Rhetoric* (Cambridge 1988), developing ideas introduced by I.A. Richards and Max Black. Cf. T.Turner, "We are Parrots", "Twins are Birds": Play of Tropes as Operational Structure", in: J.W. Fernandez (ed.), *Beyond Metaphor: The theory of tropes in anthropology* (Stanford 1991) 121-58, esp. 123-130. In the field of Egyptology similar views of the function of simile and metaphor have been explored with remarkable success. P. Sørensen, "The Argument in Ancient Egyptian Magical Formulae", *Acta Orientalia* 45 (1984) 9-13, discusses five links between the Egyptian *historiolae* and the ritual contexts. Several of them imply a collapse of the boundaries between the human situation and the mythical dimension even to the extent that the affliction itself may acquire a mythical status or parts of the body may be 'mythically re-defined'. This is precisely what I had in mind, when speaking of the simile's function as "raising the subject from the ordinary to the extraordinary".

[124] In a different context (the re-interpretation and novel combination of existing rituals in *defixiones*), Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, 134, expresses the same idea: "This permanent search for new combinations of meaning seems characteristic of the sorcerer's world. (....) What is at stake is not a mystical, "sympathetic" harmony between objects and people, but rather the construction of a universe in which things and acts carry a new and completely unusual meaning, entirely different from everyday life."

of their main vehicles is the word. "Words, both tropes and 'hard words', are the formal elements that *create the potential power to enable speech to shift or recreate perceived realities*", as Annette B. Weiner says in a fascinating article[125] on the magical application of 'hard words'.

Finally, it is not difficult to see that this is also the very implication of our observations concerning the third theme we have discussed: the use of formal techniques such as repetition, variation, anaphora, rhyme etcetera. There, too, we observed an extreme individual freedom to devise new creations, by way of gradual or abrupt transformation. While forming the technical *traît d'union* between the two worlds explored in the magical charm, these formal strategies are also expressions of the same creational process[126] and they pre-eminently belong to the realm of poetics. Surely, many of these devices also belong in the domain of rhetoric. Yet, although certainly being a rhetorical art, magic is both more than and, in many respects, different from 'normal rhetoric'. For, as we have seen time and again, in the magical spell rhetoric often runs wild in explosions of repetition, variation and transformation of such hyperbolic dimensions as could never be tolerated in normal communication, since they would entail its ruin. Cato, as we already noted, was very good in powerful words. He was an expert in both the formulas which belong to normal communication and those that refer to another world. His famous dictum *Ceterum censeo Carthaginem delendam esse* is an instance of pure rhetoric, deriving its power from its reiteration as a peroration attached to any speech he gave. Now, precisely this fact, the *aprosdoketon* effect, lends it a certain circumstantial magical quality as well. Being pronounced after every speech on whatever topic, it more often than not was completely out of (logical) order, which is at least one of the characteristics of certain components of the magical charm. It was the combination of reiteration and unexpectedness that made it 'work'. *Huat, hauat, huat ista pista sista dannabo dannaustra,* on the other hand, though being rhetorical too, is intrinsically 'magical' *by nature* in that it is a perversion of normal language and does not communicate a semantic message.

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[125] A.B. Weiner, "From Words to Objects to Magic: hard words and the boundaries of social interaction", *Man* 18 (1983) 690-709, esp.705. The italics in the quotation are mine.

[126] This is even more conspicuous in the case of the *characteres*, which form a large structure of creations out of nothing, though created on the model of orthodox script, and which gave every magician ample opportunity to give rein to his own creative imagination.

Summarizing we can say that the magical charm, from the perspective taken in this essay, is the product of a (happy?) alliance: one of its constituents is the expectancy of a marvelous potential in another world outside the cultural centre of everyday life, be it in the spatial fringes of the natural world or in the margins of time, or, on the other hand, in a completely 'other world' *beyond* the boundaries of place and time. The other is language or at least oral utterance, which can either belong to common communication and take its resort to a hyperbolic deployment of rhetorics, or transcend speech and more directly refer to—or, as I would tend to say now, help create—the world of 'otherness'.

In both these functions, and especially in the combination of both, the language of the magical formula forms a *trait d'union* between the normal and the other world. Apart from the direct and explicit references to different marginal worlds that we have amply discussed, we discovered the following strategies to achieve this:

- the alternation and above all the combination of expressions in normal language and *voces magicae* ("*asca, basca, rastaia, serc, cercer, recercel.* Nothing is it, nothing is it, nothing it will do"),
- references to various kinds of *adunata* ("*mula non parit*"),
- the very characteristic technique to repeat a *vox magica* once or twice, either without or with slight alterations, after which there is a sudden radical change in the following element(s) ("*argidam margidam sturgidam*"),
- the sudden 'alienation' in the third term of a series of three 'normal' words ("*apolithôthêti, apoxulôthêti, apokordulôthêti*"),
- the 'corruption' of words belonging to normal formulas into uncommon or illogical words ("*sta crocodile*"),
- the corruption ('magicalization') of normal words into *voces magicae* ("Go, *nemesoth*, go out ...").
- the gradual 'magicalization' in formulas such as: "*absi absa phereos*" and "*kuria kuria kassaria*",
- the interjection of normal words, especially, in the vocative form, into series of *voces magicae* ("*sakmadan euprepestate dapnounê*"),

All of these strategies, each in its own way, are most eloquent illustrations of our previous inferences. They are miniatures, as it were, partial but minutely detailed representations of magic's references to another reality, thus once more demonstrating that the relationship of text and reality is one of synecdoche. But they are more than representations, they function as keys that open the door, or sometimes rather crowbars that raze the walls, between two worlds, either through amalgamating their two languages or by the (gradual or

abrupt) alienation of orthodox language into a heteromorphous one. Nor is this all: by these very techniques they *contribute to the creation of that other world* with its marvelous potential.[127] They do so by an act of poetics. Poetics in the double sense implied in my argument: the art of making poetry and the art of creation. For the word poetics comes from Greek ποίησις (*poiesis*), which has a double meaning: 'creation' and 'poetical composition'.[128] Hence the title of this essay: the poetics of the magical charm.

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[127] Hence, in its own specific way magical language satisfies one (though certainly not all) of the characteristics of ritual language as expounded by W.T. Wheelock, "The Problem of Ritual Language: From Information to Situation", *The Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 50 (1982) 49-71, esp.58: "In general, then, ritual utterances serve both to engender a particular state of affairs, and at the same time express recognition of its reality. Text and context become manifest simultaneously."

[128] The ancients themselves were convinced of and much reflected on the enchanting effects of language in general and rhetorics and poetry in particular. The term θέλγειν and cognates are central to this issue. In a wider context, too, the connection between incantation and poetry has been often and profitably studied. I mention only a few important titles. For the enchanting effects of rhetorics see: J. de Romilly, *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge Mass.-London 1975); for poetry as incantation: Ch. Segal, "Eros and Incantation: Sappho and Oral Poetry", *Arethusa* 7 (1974) 139-60; H. Parry, *Thelxis: Magic and Imagination in Greek Myth and Poetry* (Lanham MD 1992). Gordon has an excellent discussion in his forthcoming *Spells of Wisdom*. In the early phases of many languages song/poetry and charm/incantation were covered by one word: A. Seppili, *Poesia e magia*, 188 ff.; Th. Greene, *Poésie et magie* (Paris 1991) 14-6. While Parry, 198, emphasizes the difference between magic and poetry: "Magic remains a conservative, formulaic, rote-bound exercise, while poetry is by its very nature inventive, free to choose its meter, content, tone and intention", I prefer Greene's view that magic shares with poetry the element of creativity: "ce *fiat* (...) est la source de son énergie créatrice," but that they differ in their capacities to realise that *fiat*. Comparably, Seppili 347: "La poesia come *poiesis*—come azione magica che esprime ed evoca alla presenza una (super)realità creativa."

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DYNAMICS OF RITUAL EXPERTISE IN ANTIQUITY AND BEYOND: TOWARDS A NEW TAXONOMY OF "MAGICIANS"

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In the last several decades scholarship on popular ritual has made great strides in comprehending the social construction of terms like "magic," "witchcraft," and "sorcery." In historical, classical, biblical, and religious studies there has been a distinct shift from attempts to label descriptively "magical" forms of ritual behavior to discussions of how such slippery terms were applied at various times and by various institutions. The benefits of this approach are obvious: on the one hand, an earnest attempt to dislodge the weighty legacy of James Frazer's "magical worldview"; on the other hand, the acknowledgment that people in their own cultural systems use such descriptive labels for political, sectarian, or simply taxonomic reasons, even with little reality behind the labels. Practically any practice, that is, might be labelled "magical" or "sorcery" under certain conditions.[1]

However, throughout this social-construction-of-religious-categories approach, there has been little advance in the understanding and classification of the historical figures who really *practiced* out there beyond this labelling, regardless of the pressures and dangers such labelling brought with it. Scholars have consistently reached back to an ideal "magician" type such as Weber, Van der Leeuw, or indeed Walt Disney might concoct. And yet this ideal type has been largely shattered by voluminous ethnographic and historical evidence for the location and shape of ritual expertise in local cultures. The Greek Magical Papyri, for example, are now more accurately located among innovative members of the Egyptian priesthood during the third-/fourth-century decline of the Egyptian temple infrastructure than among some putative class of *magoi*, for which we have no docu-

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[1] See esp. Charles Robert Phillips, "The Sociology of Religious Knowledge in the Roman Empire to A.D. 284," *ANRW* II.16.3 (1986):2711-32, and Alan F. Segal, "Hellenistic Magic: Some Questions of Definition," *The Other Judaisms of Late Antiquity*, Brown Judaic Studies 127 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 79-108.

mentary evidence.[2] But in my own efforts to dispense with the "magician" as an historical type and to construct a more precise model of ritual expertise for Roman Egypt I have depended on cross-cultural comparisons and, indeed, specific patterns of ritual expertise that I found in several modern cultures. Descriptive categories and ideal types are not bad in themselves, then, for they allow the historian of religions to study the relationships between various characteristics or facts that cluster together in apparent patterns: "magic" and social marginality, perhaps, or literacy and spell-composition, or urban environments and charismatic competition, or (to draw from another context) masculinized gods and mountains. Are these characteristics related intrinsically or historically—transiently? One discovers the nature of these patterns through comparison of specific cases in their historical and social context; one constructs descriptive categories to denote those patterns ("magician,""priest,""prophet"); but then those categories themselves must be "rectified"—that is, modified according to the nuances we discover through further comparison and testing.[3] This is what I propose to do here with the phenomenon I will generally label "ritual expertise," using examples somewhat arbitrarily from Africa and the African diaspora, medieval and early modern Europe, and, for the sake of this volume's focus (and my own expertise), the ancient Mediterranean world. (The few examples from beyond these cultural parameters should be taken to suggest that the models proposed are universally applicable).

By "ritual expertise" I mean, at the very least and in the most general sense, the making of amulets and remedies, the performance of small-scale rituals for explicit ends (like healing), and the oral or manual synthesis of local materials and "official" symbols to render sacred power. Certainly everyone in every culture knows some of this lore—or at least has the ability to construct ritual and amulet out of available materials. But some individuals gain this knowledge as members of families that maintain sizeable ritual traditions, handed down along male or female lines.[4] And some individuals, whether by virtue of this inheritance, their skill at ritual synthesis, their professed

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[2] David Frankfurter, "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt and the Problem of the Category 'Magician'," *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, ed. by Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 115-35; and *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), chap. 5.

[3] See esp. Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

[4] Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner's, 1971), 240-41; Christina Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), 143.

intimacy with divine beings, or some other attribute, function as community experts in the ritual negotiation of life and its vicissitudes. That is, one seeks out their blessings, their cures, their talents. It is a type of *charisma*, in the sense of a supernatural prestige with which someone is endowed in the eyes of others: a *social status*.[5]

The variety of concerns that ritual experts address extends from healing and protection to the finding of lost things and the retention of husbands and lovers. Indeed, local cultures invariably have a diversity of ritual experts in various forms of healing and divination; and much as some cultures "map" their regional saint-shrines according to specialty, so also do people perceive and map the diversity of ritual experts according to such features as their specialties, their talents, their means of power, their relative proximity or marginality, their adherence to an official religion or tradition, and their relative novelty.[6]

While acknowledging this *diversity* of ritual expertise, this paper avoids the multiplication of ever more sub-types of ritual experts—diviner, clairvoyant, healer, shaman—since *more* ideal types do not fit historical and cross-cultural actualities any better than the few old ones.[7] To proceed in the historical and ethnographic understanding of ritual expertise we need not a reformulation of static patterns but rather the framing of a limited series of patterns or clusters of characteristics of ritual experts, a series that admits overlap and aids (rather than resists) historical nuance.

I *Community Ritual Experts: Local and Peripheral*

The first realm of ritual expertise I want to address consists of that extensive domain of healers, diviners, wise women, and holy people found in virtually every society: conjure-doctors, *houngan*s and *mambo*s,

[5] See, e.g., Barbara Kerewsky Halpern and John Miles Foley, "The Power of the Word: Healing Charms as an Oral Genre," *Journal of American Folklore* 91 (1978): 903-9; Hans Sebald, "Shaman, Healer, Witch: Comparing Shamanism with Franconian Folk Magic," *Ethnologia Europaea* 14, 2 (1984): 125-42, esp. 128.

[6] On the mapping of saint shrines: William A. Christian, Jr., *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), and Anne H. Betteridge, "Specialists in Miraculous Action: Some Shrines in Shiraz," *Sacred Journeys: the Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, ed. by Alan Morinis (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1992), 189-209. On the "mapping" of ritual experts, see Willem de Blécourt, "Witch Doctors, Soothsayers, and Priests: On Cunning Folk in European Historiography and Tradition," *Social History* 19 (1994):302-3.

[7] Compare Joachim Wach's series of nine discrete "Types of Religious Authority," *Sociology of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944), 331-73, a multiplication of Max Weber's series of ideal types: *Sociology of Religion*, tr. Ephraim Fischoff (Boston: Boston Press, 1963) chaps. 2, 4.

curanderos, *ngangas*, *eleguns*, *babalawos*, *shuwafas*.[8] What seems fundamentally to govern the shape of these figures' power and of their amulets and spells is their location vis-à-vis particular communities: *local*—that is, in the immediate neighborhood—or *peripheral*—that is, set off from a community or communities. The implications of relative location of ritual experts echoes roughly those that Victor Turner observed for pilgrimage shrines.[9] The local wise woman or *curandero* works as a familiar member of the community, who inherited his or her powers from previous familiar members, whose domains of expertise and ritual expand, contract, and change with changes in the immediate community.[10] *Connaissance* is the Voudou word for that special ability in some local ritual experts to *know* clients' problems and the direction their ritual resolution should take; and it is a *social* knowledge, inextricable from the public, performative circumstances in which the ritual expert works.[11] Local ritual expertise, then, utilizes and reflects com-

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[8] Useful studies of this area of ritual expertise include: Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 177-92, 200-204, 206-8, 212-22, 227-52; Carl-Martin Edsman, "A Swedish Female Folk Healer from the Beginning of the 18th Century," *Studies in Shamanism*, ed. by Carl-Martin Edsman (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1962), 120-65; Kathryn C. Smith, "The Wise Man and His Community," *Folk Life* 15 (1977):25-35; and Anna-Leena Siikala, "Singing of Incantations in Nordic Tradition," *Old Norse and Finnish Religions and Cultic Place-Names*, ed. by Tore Ahlbäck (Åbo: Donner Institute, 1990), 191-205. On antiquity, see Richard Gordon, "Lucan's Erictho," *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble*, ed. by M. Whitby and P. Hardie (Bristol: , 1987), 235-36. Recent studies of local and regional ritual expertise in early modern and modern Mesoamerica include Ruth Behar, "Sex and Sin, Witchcraft and the Devil in Late-Colonial Mexico," *American Ethnologist* 14 (1987):34-54; Noemí Quezada, "The Inquisition's Repression of *Curanderos*," and María Helena Sánchez Ortega, "Sorcery and Eroticism in Love Magic," both in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World*, ed. by Mary Elizabeth Perry and Anne J. Cruz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 37-57, 58-92 (respectively); and Amos Megged, "Magic, Popular Medicine, and Gender in Seventeenth-Century Mexico: The Case of Isabel de Montoya," *Social History* 19 (1994):189-207

[9] Victor Turner, "The Center Out There: Pilgrim's Goal," *History of Religions* 12 (1973):191- 230, esp. 206-7, 211-13, and "Pilgrimages as Social Processes," *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1974), 166-230.

[10] Cf. Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of the Yucatan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), 233-36.

[11] On *connaissance*, see Harold Courlander, *The Drum and the Hoe: Life and Lore of the Haitian People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 11, and Karen McCarthy Brown, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 349, 356. Compare Peter Fry on a Zezura (Zimbabwe) spirit medium's talents, which were "based to a large extent on his empirical awareness of the regularities of Zezura social structure. Due to the great number of divinations which he had carried out he was aware of the structural tensions in Zezuru society and on the basis of this knowledge he was able to predict tensions in particular situations which appeared to his clients as miraculous insight." (*Spirits of Protest: Spirit-*

munity tradition and those immediate, family-based traditions that make up the local cosmos.

On the other extreme, the peripheral, we find people beyond the reach of simple consultation—to whom, rather, one must *travel* or who themselves travel from place to place. Whether itinerant or established on the periphery of settlement, such a ritual expert may be credited with powers that surpass those available in the local milieu. He may attract clients and supplicants over a much broader territory, much as do regional temples or shrines. And yet, this ritual expert may not serve to bind disparate communities—e.g., as do peripheral pilgrimage centers that are attended and honored by numerous regional villages. Indeed, the peripheral ritual expert may be the object of some suspicion, bearing as he does that symbolic outsiderness often taken as danger.[12] Thus his amulets and ritual cures may be seen as somewhat more exotic, but the stories that circulate around him may envision him as sorcerer as well as healer. The appeal of such peripheral ritual experts is well-illustrated in Africa, where regional healing cults can attract people for hundreds of miles around.[13] The potential danger of such experts in the eyes of local people, on the other hand, is reflected in much African-American folklore, in which itinerant or regional conjurers are credited with darker forms of ritual and described as in tension with local healers. Zora Neale Hurston recorded the story of a rivalry between a rural African-American community ritual expert, "Aunt Judy," and a more mysterious and powerful expert on the social and geographic periphery, "Uncle Monday."

> Year after year this feeling kept up. Every now and then some little incident would accentuate the rivalry. Monday was sitting on top of the heap, but Judy was not without her triumphs.
>
> Finally she began to say that she could reverse anything that he could put down. She said she could not only reverse it, she could throw it back on him, let alone his client. Nobody talked to him about her boasts.

Mediums and the Articulation of Consensus among the Zezuru of Southern Rhodesia [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976], 68-69, quoted in Thomas W. Overholt, *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, SBL Sources for Biblical Study 17 [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986], 243).

[12] On the danger of the marginal person see Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, tr. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 26-40, and Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: RKP, 1966), 94-113.

[13] See, e.g., Alison Redmayne, "Chikanga: An African Diviner with an International Reputation," *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations* ASA Monographs 9, ed. by Mary Douglas (London: Tavistock, 1970), 103-28

> People never talked to him except on business anyway. Perhaps Judy felt safe in boasting for this reason.[14]

A business rivalry thus progressed into a ritual rivalry; and finally (the legend concludes), Uncle Monday defeated Aunt Judy in a frightening display of power. For local people, the result was an extensive body of legends describing Uncle Monday's mysteries and dangers. Indeed, such a folklore of the peripheral expert's danger is common to communities working out the relationships and differences among ritual experts.[15]

It must be remembered that this danger is a matter of perception, not of the rituals they actually perform. Some peripheral ritual experts might capitalize on these perceptions and stage exotic or hostile rites for some clients. But there is little evidence for people working this way—"from the left hand"—*by profession*. Rumors and accusations to this effect seem to arise under particular social circumstances—panics or rivalry, for example—and tend to polarize the marginally-based ritual experts as entirely evil "sorcerers."

Conversely, there are innumerable examples of *cooperation and exchange* between peripheral and local ritual experts, as when local healers claim the authority of or recommend visits to regional shrines, or when more "familiar" experts refer ambiguous matters to peripheral specialists (like exorcists), or when local and regional experts combine forces to negotiate a community problem (e.g., in cases of witch-cleansing, as discussed below). Both local and peripheral experts can gain prestige from such cooperation: the peripheral expert by the deference shown her from the "center," the local expert by signifying his participation in a wider network of ritual expertise and shrines.[16]

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[14] Zora Neale Hurston, *The Sanctified Church* (Berkeley: Turtle Island, 1981), 38.

[15] See, e.g., Hurston, *The Sanctified Church*, 31-40, and Elizabeth McAlister's discussion of the Haitian *bòkò*: "A Sorcerer's Bottle: The Visual Art of Magic in Haiti," *Sacred Arts of Haitian Voudou*, ed. by Donald J. Cosentino (Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum, 1995), 305, 316. In the testimony of Gregorio, a Navajo "hand-trembler," a neighbor preferred his services to those of itinerant healers from "over the mountain," since his talents were familiar and proven (Alexander H. and Dorothea C. Leighton, *Gregorio, the Hand-Trembler: A Psychobiological Personality Study of a Navaho Indian*, Peabody Museum Papers 40,1 [Cambridge: Peabody Museum, 1949], 55-56, quoted in Overholt, *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, 91.

[16] See, e.g., Kingsley Garbett, "Disparate Regional Cults and a Unitary Ritual Field in Zimbabwe," *Regional Cults*, ed. by R.P. Werbner (London: Academic Press, 1977), 55-92, esp. 88-91; and Michel S. Laguerre, *Voodoo and Politics in Haiti* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 95-96, on local *houngan*'s referral of clients and initiates to the regional voudou shrine of Saut d'Eau (Haiti).

The location of the ritual expert has much bearing on religions of the late antique Mediterranean world. Hagiographical texts refer to the competition between holy men or saints' shrines and local ritual experts; but in so doing they often reflect the intimacy between the experts and their communities, much like Aunt Judy in her secure position of boasting. Gregory of Tours describes "the custom of the rustics [in sixth-century Gaul to] obtain bandages and potions from sortilegi and harioli"; however, Gregory avers, "a little dust of the basilica [of St. Martin] has more power than those men with their witless remedies."[17] It is in a ritual domain of vital concern and tradition—healing—that the St. Martin shrine seeks to compete. So also in sixth-century Asia Minor, a village headman cannot wait for St. Theodore of Sykeon to heal his brother through blessings, so he runs "to a woman who used enchantments" for an amulet.[18] The same Vita of St. Theodore describes a man who "dwelt in the same village as the saint and was a skilled sorcerer, versed in wickedness." It was this person who provided the major ritual services—amulets, healing, protection—in the village of Sykeon, thus posing (like Aunt Judy in the story above) immense competition to St. Theodore, a thaumaturge operating from the periphery.[19] In general, then, one perceives around the Mediterranean a culture of discrete religious worlds, based in village societies. And the ritual experts who aided these worlds were essential parts of those societies. It is no wonder that the attempt to install a Christian cult laying claim to an area much more expansive than just the village environment required such violent competition at the village level.[20]

Peripheral ritual experts existed as well in antiquity, but the peculiar Roman ambivalence towards marginal or exotic religious practices has left us with little more than the words *goēs* or *magos*, plastered across a diversity of ritual experts in a vain attempt to classify them or

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[17] Gregory of Tours, *Miracles of St. Martin*, 26-27, tr. William C. McDermott, *Monks, Bishops, and Pagans: Christian Culture in Gaul and Italy, 500-700*, ed. by Edward Peters (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), 169. See the analysis by Valerie I. J. Flint, *The Rise of Magic in Early Medieval Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 59-84.

[18] Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon, §143, tr. by Elisabeth Dawes and Norman H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints* (Crestwood NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1977), 181.

[19] Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon, §§37-38, tr. Dawes/Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints*, 113-15.

[20] See Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire, A.D. 100-400* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1984), and *Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1997); and Flint, *Rise of Magic*.

to highlight the genuine against a marketplace of frauds.[21] The most obvious examples of real ritual experts of the peripheral type from the Roman world must be Alexander of Abonoteichos, who established a healing cult of Asclepius in northern Asia Minor in the late second century C.E., and the holy man Apollonius of Tyana. We note also that, according to our sources, Alexander and Apollonius each earned their thaumaturgical reputations in *affiliation* with some well-recognized tradition of the time: the gods Asclepius and Apollo for Alexander, Pythagoreanism for Apollonius.[22]

These affiliations do not mean that Alexander and Apollonius were simply "priests" of certain gods or traditions. "Priest" is an unhelpful category if it groups together figures serving within an extensive cultic institution with figures who, by family tradition, initiation, or call, maintain or develop idiosyncratically a small local or regional shrine. Alexander and Apollonius's "affiliations" highlight one of the crucial skills in ritual experts both local and peripheral, skills particularly well-represented among the independent shrine-professionals of West Africa and Haiti: their ability to synthesize. Whether in the form of an amulet, the staging of an altar, the weaving of prayers and spells, or the codification of gesture, ritual experts the world over bring together the old and the new, the traditional and the exotic, the hand-made and the imported, and—if literate—the authority of writing with the concrete efficacy of the written letter. It may be, indeed, by virtue of his technological expertise that a local individual might be viewed as capable in ritual preparations: for example, local scribes and intellectuals who wrote out amulets for people who asked.[23]

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[21] On the use of "magos" for itinerant or otherwise exotic ritual experts see Frankfurter, "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt," 131-35; Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World*, tr. by Franklin Philip (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), chap. 1; and for eighth- and seventh-century (BCE) Greece, Walter Burkert, "Itinerant Diviners and Magicians: A Neglected Element in Cultural Contacts," *The Greek Renaissance of the Eighth Century B.C.: Tradition and Innovation*, ed. by Robin Hägg (Stockholm: Swedish Institute in Athens, 1983), 115-20. Cf. Morton Smith's classic review of terms for late antique ritual experts in *Jesus the Magician* (San Franciso: Harper & Row, 1978), 81-93.

[22] Lucian, *Alexander* (overt links with Asclepius: §§19, 13, 43; with Apollo: §§36, 43), on whose historical interpretation see C. P. Jones, *Culture and Society in Lucian* (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1986), ch. 12. Philostratus, *V. Apollonius*.

[23] On the idiosyncratic nature of such shrines see Robert Farris Thompson, *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of Africa and the African Americas* (New York: Museum for African Art, 1993), along with sources on Voudou in n.11 (above), and Benjamin C. Ray, *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 116-19. On the overlap of ritual expertise and local *literati* see M. Bloch,

The ritual expert, then, is a *bricoleur*. She must be adroit enough in shrine construction, amulet manufacture, and spell composition that clients will perceive not only her grandmother's gifts but also her own remarkable attention to a changing environment. Far from the independent, churchless magician imagined by the Durkheim school, ritual experts often define religious activity in their vicinities, integrating society, supernatural cosmos, landscape, and an immense body of tradition through their séances. In the case of Alexander of Abonoteichos we see an individual who incorporated quite well-known religious idioms in defining his powers—oracles, images, speech-forms, Asclepian allusions—much as contemporary *curandero*s, *santero*s, *mambo*s, and *houngan*s incorporate Catholic mythology. It is, indeed, in the ritual experts' activities that we can best see the deliberate interaction of what Robert Redfield called the *Little Tradition* and the *Great Tradition*.[24]

II *Quasi-Institutional Literati: Local and Peripheral*

To make use of Redfield's ideal dichotomy it is important to recognize (as Redfield himself stressed) that neither "tradition" exists by itself, especially in the complicated cultural mixtures that come with Christianization and Islamization. However, it is interesting and important to consider how *representatives of religious institutions* are *viewed* in the perspective of local communities. They bear with them, either in skill or general "aura," the *authority* of an idealized Great Tradition, supernaturally powerful through its global scope. Here, then, is the second area of ritual expertise to be addressed: those who "stand for" Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, or some more inchoate, if recognizable and authoritative, religious ideology—and who serve ritually the needs of local society. It is writing culture itself, Ernest Gellner has observed, that "engender[s this] class of literate specialists, in alliance

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"Astrology and Writing in Madagascar," *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. by Jack Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1968), 278-96, esp. 281-83; Gordon, "Lucan's Erictho," 236-37; David Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 211-13, 257-58. On ritual texts and amulets reflecting the work of local *literati*, see Leslie S. B. MacCoull, "P.Cair.Masp. II 67188 Verso 1-5: the *Gnostica* of Dioscorus of Aphrodito," *Tyche* 2 (1987):95- 97 (6th century Egypt); Roy Kotansky, *Greek Magical Amulets I*, P.Col. 22,1 (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994), #58 (4th century Jordan); and, for early modern England, Smith, "Wise Man and His Community," 27.

[24] Robert Redfield, *Peasant Society and Culture: An Anthropological Approach to Civilization* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1956), chap. 3, and Eric R. Wolf, *Peasants* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 100-106.

or more often in competition with freelance illiterate thaumaturges"[25]—that is, such community ritual experts as were described above. But just like the latter, there are observable differences in technique and "performance" between (a) those literate specialists who are *based* locally—local priests, clerics, scribes, rabbis, monks—and thereby become part of local culture; (b) those who are *itinerant*; and (c) those who offer personalized ritual services at peripheral saint-shrines or temples.

The local ecclesiastic, who weaves the cadences and mythology of orthodox liturgy and cosmology with the exigencies and spirits of the local cosmos, has been well-documented in Byzantine and medieval Christian cultures. Karen Jolly's analysis of Anglo-Saxon elf-charms points over and over to the synthetic capabilities of local priests, while the extensive corpus of Coptic amulets and grimoires reflects local Christian priests and monks in Egypt.[26] In ancient Egypt too, so temple documents testify, it was the temple-priests who applied "official" mythology and ritual technique to the realities of healing, childbirth, and protection.[27] Ancient Mesopotamia held two categories of literate healing experts, roughly comparable to a healer and a pharmacist, whose cumulatively broad range of ritual activities are reflected in the manuals they used.[28] And so also Buddhist monks in Thailand, rabbis of all periods and places, and Muslim clerics in various African communities—all these figures *mediate* the sacred texts, teachings, supernatural world, and authority of their Great Tradition into the local world. They write amulets and utter blessings that combine the offi-

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[25] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 8.

[26] Karen Louise Jolly, *Popular Religion in Late Saxon England: Elf Charms in Context* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith (eds.), *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994), esp. 259-62 ; Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 257-64, 270-72; Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 29-36, 202; Flint, *Rise of Magic*, 185-93; and now Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1997), 12-13.

[27] Serge Sauneron, "Le monde du magicien égyptien," *Le monde du sorcier*, Sources orientales 7 (Paris: Éditions du Seuil,1966), 27-65; Robert Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, SAOC 54 (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1993), 204-5, 220-33; Yvan Koenig, *Magie et magiciens dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Paris: Pygmalion, 1994), 19-38; Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 210-14. Herman Te Velde nuances the popular ritual expertise of the lector priest further: "Theology, Priests, and Worship in Ancient Egypt," *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* 3, ed. by J. Sasson et al. (New York: Scribner's, 1995), 1747.

[28] JoAnn Scurlock, "Physician, Exorcist, Conjurer, Magician: A Tale of Two Healing Professionals," in *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical, and Interpretive Perspectives*, ed. by Tzvi Abusch and K. van den Toorn (Groningen: Styx, 1999), 69-79.

cial and local idioms. Their gestures transfer their "charisma of office" into the local arena, its needs and beliefs.[29] In many cultures the "Great Tradition"—the sense of a Christian*ity* or Budd*hism* or Islam—has been only comprehensible through the synthetic acts, spells, and amulets of such literate ritual experts.

Among these quasi-institutional *literati*, the principal dynamics of their charisma as ritual specialists lie in two crucial features. First, their *literacy*, particularly in the texts and scripts of the Great Tradition, endows them with a unique prestige in the community, for they can transform the rational or "informative" sense of sacred texts into a "performative" sense, producing the numinous, empowered letter, amulet, or edible verse out of the official words, prayers, and pages of scripture. Craftsmen of the written word, they can turn mere letters into gods, shapes, images, and all manner of "performative" or illocutionary arrangements.[30] Secondly—and related to their control over sacred texts—their charisma lies in their *official or quasi-official status* as designated representatives—authorized extensions—of the Great Tradition. In a sense, this official status sets him apart from the rest of his social environment. How are these literati, like the commu-

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[29] Buddhist monks: Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, "Literacy in a Buddhist Village in North-East Thailand," *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, 107-12, 123-24, 128-30, and *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), Part 3. Low- caste Vedic teachers in India: Kathleen Gough, "Literacy in Kērala," *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, 149-50. Local Muslim clerics: Abdullahi Osman El-Tom, "Drinking the Koran: The Meaning of Koranic Verses in Berti erasure," *'Popular Islam' South of the Sahara* (*Africa* 55, 4), ed. by J. D. Y. Peel and C. C. Stewart (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 414-31; Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 286-87, 298; David Sperling, "The Frontiers of Prophecy: Healing, the Cosmos, and Islam on the East African Coast in the Nineteenth Century," *Revealing Prophets: Prophecy in Eastern African History*, ed. by David M. Anderson and Douglas H. Johnson (London: Currey, 1995), 90-92; and Winifred Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt* (London: Harrap, 1927 repr. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2000), chaps. 11-12, 14-15 (including Coptic clerics). Rabbis: William Scott Green, "Palestinian Holy Men: Charismatic Leadership and Rabbinic Tradition," *ANRW* 2.19.2 (1979), 619-47, with surveys of later—Hekhalot, Kabbalistic, Hasidic—ritual expertise by Michael Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), and Moshe Idel, "On Judaism, Jewish Mysticism, and Magic," *Envisioning Magic*, 195-214, although both these authors ascribe "magical" practices to a "secondary"—extra-rabbinic—elite.

[30] On the categories "performative" and "informative" as variant modes of textual meaning, see Sam D. Gill, "Non-Literate Traditions and Holy Books," *The Holy Book in Comparative Perspective*, ed. by Frederick M. Denny and Rodney L. Taylor (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1985), 234-39; cf. Osman El-Tom, "Drinking the Koran". On formulations of the numinous letter in antiquity see David Frankfurter, "The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions," *Helios* 21,2 (1994): 189-221.

nity ritual experts above, perceived differently according to their locations—within communities or on the periphery? The Coptic "magical" corpora, for example, reflect people journeying *from* their homes *to* monasteries or saints' shrines, to get amulets, oracles, or healing from monks and scribes. Moroccan Muslim pilgrims to the mountain shrines of saints (*walis*) find there official guardians (*muqaddams*) who can interpret dreams, advise, and provide amulets and prayers in the name of the saint.[31] Ethiopian villagers receive the *itinerant* services of the *debtera*, a minor cleric responsible for both official liturgical duties and exorcistic healing, with multiple roles in between.[32]

In the case of the Coptic monastery and the shrine of the Muslim saint in North Africa, the ritual expert seems to become a relatively impersonal representative of what Turner called "the Center Out There"—that is, the pilgrimage goal, the culminative sacred place.[33] The shrine expert is simply the person who provides pilgrims with the mantic advice and concrete blessings they seek. In the case of the Ethiopian *debtera*, however, his itinerant lifestyle and his specialty in exorcism and the manipulation of demons have created suspicion and even stigma in the eyes of villagers.[34] Thus, as the monk or shrine functionary provides ritual services in an air of anonymity and established sanctuary, the itinerant cleric plies his ritual crafts on the cusp of Great Tradition, local tradition, and personal innovation—and as a bearer of that alternately dangerous and alluring "charisma of otherness" some anthropologists have described.[35]

III *Prophets*

As we scan the field of ritual experts from those "next-door," ensconced in local tradition, to those on the outskirts of and even alien to local tradition, we find some who are most extreme in their marginality to culture—almost pitted against it. The amulets they dis-

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[31] Elizabeth W. Fernea, *Saints and Spirits: Religious Expression in Morocco* [film and guide] (Austin, Texas: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1979).

[32] See Allan Young, "Magic as a `Quasi-Profession': The Organization of Magic and Magical Healing Among Amhara," *Ethnology* 14 (1975):245-65; Jacques Mercier, *Ethiopian Magical Scrolls*, tr. by Richard Pevear (New York: Braziller, 1979); and Kay Kaufman Shelemay, "The Musician and Transmission of Religious Tradition: The Multiple Roles of the Ethiopian Däbtära," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 22 (1992):242-60.

[33] Turner, "'The Center Out There'" (above, n.9).

[34] Young, "Magic as a 'Quasi-Profession'."

[35] See above, n.12.

pense and efficacious gestures they cast carry the prestige not of tradition so much as of some new ideology. We often apply the word "prophet" to such figures, but it is less helpful to invoke Weber here than to follow modern anthropologists in seeing the prophet, too, as a *bricoleur*—a combiner of immediate and distant idioms, local and broad scopes of identity, and a sense of the radically new with the recognizability of something altogether traditional.[36] As we see them in Melanesia, in Africa, in native America, in Medieval Europe, and in the deserts of Byzantium, prophet-figures articulate a new frame of reference: a new scheme of the cosmos and of social relations. But more importantly, they place themselves in the middle of these ideologies as thaumaturges—miracle-workers, ritual experts, mediators of the supernatural world. They develop new rituals, new protective amulets (especially for warfare), and new healing rites.[37] Thaumaturgy and the ritual expertise that brings it are so central to the roles prophets occupy because they dramatize the new ideology and its promises.[38] The emphasis on the expulsion of demons, for example, that one so often finds among Christian prophet-figures reflects not the native cosmos of capricious and beneficial spirits but rather the Christian ideology as it encounters and polarizes the native cosmos. The Christian prophet-figure, then, both perceives and has the power to expel this new cosmic moietie of demons.

This model of ritual expertise is borne out especially well among Egyptian desert monks like Antony and Shenoute, whose writings,

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[36] Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of "Cargo" Cults in Melanesia* (2nd ed.; New York: Schocken, 1968), xiv-xviii; Kenelm Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969), 30-32, 153-63. Cf. Elizabeth Colson, "A Continuing Dialogue: Prophets and Local Shrines among the Tonga of Zambia," *Regional Cults*, 119-39.

[37] European: Norman Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium* (rev. ed.; London: Temple Smith, 1970), 41, 42-43, 49-50, 69-70. African indigenous: Douglas H. Johnson, *Nuer Prophets* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), esp. 85-88. Handsome Lake (18th century Seneca): Arthur C. Parker, *The Code of Handsome Lake, The Seneca Prophet* (Albany: State Museum, 1913), 49-50, quoted in Overholt, *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, 113. Short Bull (Sioux apostle of Ghost Dance): James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Washington: Gov't Printing Office, 1896; abr. repr. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 30-31. In general on the use of thaumaturgical performance and claims by prophetic figures see Michael Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion: Millenarian Protest Movements against the European Colonial Order* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), chap. 6, and Bryan R. Wilson, *Magic and the Millennium* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), chaps. 3-6.

[38] Cf. Anitra Bingham Kolenkow, "Relationships between Miracle and Prophecy in the Greco-Roman World and Early Christianity," *ANRW* 2.22.2 (1980), 1470-1506.

sermons, and (particularly in Antony's case) hagiographies describe these saints' special interests in and powers against demons. But even today one sees this pattern in Christian exorcistic cults and their specialists. In Sri Lanka, for example, a Father Jayamanne gained enormous regional charisma for his dramatic exorcisms at the Marian shrine of a small village. A typical pattern thus begins to emerge in the interconnection between the promotion of a new ideology (e.g., Christ's power over demonic local gods), dramatic exorcistic ritual, and widespread thaumaturgical reputation. The same pattern seems also to explain early traditions of Jesus as a thaumaturge: both the Synoptic Sayings Source (Q) and the Gospel of Mark reflect a peculiar emphasis on exorcism and demonology.[39]

But Egyptian monks did not just do exorcisms; they offered healing, divination, spells, blessings, and amulets, a phenomenon recorded in all kinds of sources. For many villages monks came to function as *the* chief ritual experts, addressing all manner of everyday misfortune from their cells and caves with all types of ritual and gesture—even to the point of winning disapproval from some official quarters for unorthodox practice. So, for example, the fifth-century Coptic abbot Shenoute complains how, in his time,

> … those fallen into poverty or in sickness or indeed some other trial abandon God and run after enchanters or diviners or indeed seek other acts of deception, just as I myself have seen: the snake's head tied on someone's hand, another one with the crocodile's tooth tied to his arm, and another with fox claws tied to his legs— especially since it was an official who told him that it was wise to do so! Indeed, when I demanded whether the fox claws would heal him, he answered, "It was a great monk who gave them to me, saying 'Tie them on you (and) you will find relief'."
>
> Moreover, this is the manner that they anoint themselves with oil or that they pour over themselves water while receiving (ministrations) from enchanters or drug-makers, with every deceptive kind of relief.… Still

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[39] See especially Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 186-93, 273-77. On Antony's own interest in demons see Samuel Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony: Monasticism and the Making of a Saint* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 139-41, 216-24, and on Shenoute's: Jacques van der Vliet, "Chénouté et les démons," *Actes du IVè congrès copte* 2, ed. by M. Rassart-Debergh and J. Ries (Louvain: Institut orientaliste, 1992), 41-49. Sri Lanka: R. L. Stirrat, *Power and Religiosity in a Post-Colonial Setting: Sinhala Catholics in Contemporary Sri Lanka* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), chaps. 4-5, 7, and on contemporary Christian exorcists, Stephen Hunt, "Managing the Demonic: Some Aspects of the Neo-Pentecostal Deliverance Ministry," *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 13, 2 (1998):215-30. On Jesus, see exorcistic material in Q (Lk 11:14-26) as well as Mark (1:23ff and *passim*).

> again, they pour water over themselves or anoint themselves with oil from elders of the church, or even from monks![40]

Shenoute here finds that monks have come to fit into the whole complex array of ritual experts available to fifth-century Coptic villagers. In this aspect of monks' everyday ritual services there is considerable overlap between the desert prophet type and the "basic" community ritual expert type, and it would not be useful to make a hard distinction. Indeed, it seems as if Christian "prophet" figures were progressively assimilated to the local environment, to fit local Egyptian needs.[41] But what distinguishes these monks in early Coptic Egypt—distinguishes them from other indigenous ritual experts—is their *simultaneous reflection* of the Christian cosmos and the exorcistic and thaumaturgical authority that that cosmos brought with it. In the eyes of clients they stand for the Christian power to heal and protect. The monk's charisma as ritual expert came from that novel worldview in which all misfortune and illness must devolve upon hostile demons, and those demons could be smashed *only* by a "friend of God."[42]

IV *The Healer's Enemy: Magos, Sorcerer, Witch*

With our attention on ideologies that promote thaumaturgy and that position their prophets as ritual experts of astounding power, I want

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[40] Shenoute, *Contra Origenistas*, ed. Tito Orlandi (Rome 1985), 255-59, my translation. Stephen Emmel lists this text as "Acephalous Work A14" in "Shenoute's Literary Corpus" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1993), 480, 1010. See Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 214- 17. Compare also *Martyrdom of Apa Shenoufe*, Pierpont Morgan Codex M 583, f. 119, ed. E.A.E. Reymond and J.W.B. Barns, *Four Martyrdoms from the Pierpont Morgan Coptic Codices* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 102, 203; Paphnutius, *History of the Monks of Upper Egypt* 99-138, tr. Tim Vivian, CS 140 [Kalamazoo MI 1993], 121-40; and the *Life of Bishop Pisentius*, ed. & tr. E.A. Wallis Budge, *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1913; repr. New York: AMS, 1977), 75-127. In general, see Peter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (London: Faber & Faber, 1982), 103-52, and *Authority and the Sacred: Aspects of the Christianisation of the Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 57-78; and Frankfurter, "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt," 127-28.

[41] Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 257-64. Cf. Matthew Schoffeleers, "Christ in African Folk Theology: The *Nganga* Paradigm," *Religion in Africa*, ed. by Thomas D. Blakely, Walter E.A. van Beek, and Dennis L. Thomson (London: Currey, 1994), 72-88.

[42] See Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity, A.D. 150-750* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1971), 53-56, 101-2, and *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1975), chap. 4.

finally to shift my focus from real ritual experts to imagined ones: that is, witches, sorcerers, and plain *magoi*. We are familiar with the polemical, even paranoid worldviews that have led Roman governors, early Christian bishops, early modern inquisitors, and the leaders of African witch-purges to regard certain forms of ritual expertise or practice as evil and subversive and their practitioners as *types* of evil and subversion. But we often forget that such terms of castigation against "other" ritual specialists, real or imagined, arise in popular culture itself, among local ritual experts. One repeatedly finds indigenous dichotomies between positive ritual expertise—invariably "ours"—and negative ritual expertise—that is, intrinsically subversive, out of bounds, "of the left hand." Philostratus, for example, describes a *goēteia* ostensibly distinct from the thaumaturgy of Apollonius of Tyana, a base sphere of ritual meant for sports or business competition or love, and promulgated by charlatans (VII.39). In Heliodorus's novel *Aethiopika*, the idealized Egyptian priest Kalasiris can aid the hero and heroine with all manner of "authentic" Egyptian potions, but he still juxtaposes his own craft to another sphere of ritual that is

> … of low rank and, you might say, crawls upon the earth; it waits upon ghosts and skulks around dead bodies; it is addicted to magic herbs, and spells are its stock-in-trade; no good ever comes of it; no benefit ever accrues to its practitioners; generally it brings about its own downfall, and its occasional successes are paltry and mean-spirited—the unreal made to appear real, hopes brought to nothing; it devises wickedness and panders to corrupt pleasures.[43]

What is particularly interesting about this picture of alien or subversive ritual is the role of *and benefit to* real ritual experts in conjuring such an enemy. Theodore of Sykeon is hardly unique in the history of religions in recasting a rival ritual expert as an enemy; and indeed, it is significant that he casts this rival as the very source of the problems he (Theodore) must resolve by the good ritual. Certainly Christian materials show this demonizing of the competition in most vivid terms. But one finds this kind of polarizing of ritual spheres, in which "our" healer resolves the *maleficium* brought by "that" sorcerer, across cultures and religious situations. The mid-twentieth-century Nuer prophet Ngundeng "waged a consistent campaign against magicians, insisting that they bury their magic in [his specially-constructed

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[43] Heliodorus, *Aethiopica* 3.16, tr. J.R. Morgan, "Heliodorus: An Ethiopian Story," *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. by B. P. Reardon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 421, on which see Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 233-37.

shrine,] the Mound. He denounced magicians in his songs and accused some pretended prophets of conjuring." The early-nineteenth-century Seneca prophet Handsome Lake railed against witches as the primary threat to community health and welfare, who would soon defer to his revelation and confess their sins. A Melanesian shaman of the 1950's, taken over by a local goddess, warned her communities especially about sorcery, inspiring several purges.[44] In such cases a world of evil ritual and ritual expertise became the foil—the antitype—to the charisma of the newly established ritual expert.

European historians are increasingly noting the dynamic presence of local "witch-diviners"—"cunning folk" in English tradition—in identifying witchcraftscourges in their very communities.[45] They may initiate a lynching by pointing out a specific "witch," or they may articulate a more amorphous witch-scourge that could only be resolved through their own spiritual warfare. Carlo Ginzberg and others have identified fraternities of local seers who insured fertility and protected community fortune by battling witches while in dream-states.[46] So also in late second-century Anatolia a regional oracle recommended that a town hold a public festival to rid itself of a pestilence brought by *magoi*.[47] In these cases, local or regional diviners articulate cosmic misfortune in terms of witchcraft; then they recom-

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[44] Ngundeng: Johnson, *Nuer Prophets*, 96 (see further, 97-99); Handsome Lake: Overholt, *Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective* 105, 112, 117; Melanesian shaman: Matthew Tamoane, "Kamoai of Darapap and the Legend of Jari," *Prophets of Melanesia*, ed. by Garry Trompf (Port Moresby: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1977), 174-211, excerpted in Overholt, ibid., 285-95, esp. 292-93,

[45] Keith Thomas, "The Relevance of Social Anthropology to the Historical Study of English Witchcraft," *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*, 60-61; Tekla Dömötör, "The Cunning Folk in English and Hungarian Witch Trials," *Folklore Studies in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Venetia J. Newall (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1980), 183-87; Sebald, "Shaman, Healer, Witch," 127-28; de Blécourt, "Witch Doctors, Soothsayers, and Priests"; Jacqueline Simpson, "Witches and Witchbusters," *Folklore* 107 (1996):5-18; Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (New York: Viking, 1996), 174-95, 207-8, 217-18..

[46] Carlo Ginzberg, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, tr. by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), esp. 25-26; Mircea Eliade, "Some Observations on European Witchcraft," *HR* 14 (1975):158-65; Dömötör, "The Cunning Folk in English and Hungarian Witch Trials," 184; Gustav Henningsen, "'The Ladies from Outside': An Archaic Pattern of the Witches' Sabbath," *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, ed. by Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 191-215.

[47] Fritz Graf, "An Oracle Against Pestilence from a Western Anatolian Town," *ZPE* 92 (1992):267-79.

mend, or themselves lead, the rites to neutralize that witchcraft. Examples of such cunning people in England and France and of professional witch-finders in Africa continue through the twentieth century, often with quite insidious effects. More often than not, witch-finders tend to be ritual experts themselves, the eclectic purveyors of amulets, remedies, and divination from the center or, more often, the periphery.[48] In African witch-cleansings, for example, the expert is often an outsider, but conversant in the idioms and expectations of local communities.[49] On the other hand, some witch-finders' entire "practices" may focus exclusively on the resolution of the witchcraft and sorcery plagues they identify: they become "professionals in supernatural evil," much like early Christian exorcistic prophets and contemporary investigators and therapists of "Satanic Ritual Abuse."[50]

In every case one can see a relationship between the *image* of hostile magic (or sorcery or witchcraft) and the charisma of the one who identifies the problem, articulates its scope and nature, and provides effective remedies and *apotropaia* against it.[51] Why a ritual expert, independent or official, might focus her clairvoyant powers on some poor old lady as the antitype rather than a more *inchoate* witchcraft, and then why witchcraft might be a more compelling diagnosis than demons or the untimely dead, is due to immediate social, historical, or even psychological circumstances.[52]

In some historical cases the image of subversive ritual experts becomes a matter of official tradition. Entire priestly institutions have projected a witch-scourge, or simply an inverse, dangerous ritual—a

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[48] Cf. I. M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion* (2nd ed.; London: Routledge, 1989), 96, and Brown, *Mama Lola*, 188-89, on projections of evil wizardry in voudou.

[49] Witchcraft specialists: Redmayne, "Chikanga"; R.G. Willis, "Instant Millennium: The Sociology of African Witch-Cleansing Cults," *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations*, 129-39; Maia Green, "Witchcraft Suppression Practices and Movements: Public Politics and the Logic of Purification," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39 (1997):319-45. Robin Briggs associates professional witch-finding with *peripheral* ritual experts: *Witches and Neighbors*, 174-75, 200.

[50] See Jeanne Favret-Saada, *Deadly Words: Witchcraft in the Bocage*, tr. by Catherine Cullen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), (quotation from p.8), and Hunt, "Managing the Demonic". On contemporary Satanic abuse investigators, see Robert D. Hicks, "The Police Model of Satanism Crime," and Ben Crouch and Kelly Damphousse, "Law Enforcement and the Satanic Crime Connection: A Survey of 'Cult Cops'," *The Satanism Scare*, ed. by James T. Richardson, Joel Best, and David G. Bromley (New York: De Gruyter, 1991), 175-89, 191-204.

[51] On structural relations between experts/accusers/healers and witch/sorcerer-stereotypes, see Gábor Klaniczay, "Hungary: The Accusations and the Universe of Popular Magic," *Early Modern European Witchcraft*, 238-43, and Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors*, 182, 184.

[52] See Lucy Mair, *Witchcraft* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1969), 11-27.

"magic"—in order to bolster their priestly charisma and ritual authority. Late Egyptian texts often excoriate a folk "magic" as inferior to their own.[53] In ancient Babylonian witch-execration rites the vivid (supernatural) witch-figure that brings all manner of misfortune functions as a structural antitype to the priestly ritual expert.[54]

V *Conclusions*

"A civilization," Redfield described, "is an organization of specialists, of kinds of role-occupiers in characteristic relations to one another and to lay people and performing characteristic functions concerned with the transmission of tradition."[55] Indeed, any discussion of ritual experts must appreciate the complex distribution of skills, authority, lore, and claims that permeate even the smallest society. Designation as a ritual expert can depend on family lineage and heritage, acquired skills, physical appearance, intellectual idiosyncrasy, supernatural claims, and institutional affiliation. As much as Redfield emphasized individuals' connections with an outside world and the prestige thus acquired, so the student of "magic" must be concerned equally with the very individuality of villagers, the natural distribution of skills and prestige in supernatural mediation that arises simply by living alongside one another in time and space.

The "dynamics of ritual expertise" covered in this paper in each case affect the way that local communities would understand and credit the rites, amulets, authority, and charisma of ritual experts. Among these dynamics are a figure's (1) proximity or marginality to the community; (2) abilities as combiner of new and old idioms and technologies; (3) institutional affiliation and literate training, through which the Great Tradition could be mediated with local tradition and needs; (4) projection, as prophet, of a compelling new ideology ac-

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[53] See Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt*, 233-24, on evidence from Ipuwer, Papyrus Harris, Heliodorus, and PGM XII.

[54] Tzvi Abusch, "The Demonic Image of the Witch in Standard Babylonian Literature: The Reworking of Popular Conceptions by Learned Exorcists," *Religion, Science, and Magic: In Concert and In Conflict*, ed. by Jacob Neusner, Ernest S. Frerichs, and Paul V.M. Flesher (New York: Oxford, 1989), 27-58, and "The Socio-Religious Framework of the Babylonian Witchcraft Ceremony *Maqlû*: Some Observations on the Introductory Section of the Text, Part II," *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield*, ed. by Ziony Zevit, Seymour Gitin, and Michael Sokoloff (Winona Lake IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 467-94. Cf. Ugaritic priestly incantations against sorcerers: RIH 78/20, tr. Fleming, and 1992.2014, tr. Pardee, *The Context of Scripture 1: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, ed. by William W. Hallo (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 301-2, 327-28.

[55] Redfield, *Peasant Society and Culture*, 102.

cording to which he himself stands as *thaumaturge extraordinaire*; and finally, (5) ability to articulate a world of dangerous ritual expertise and to resolve it on his own terms. The latter phenomenon stands outside the taxonomy of historical ritual expertise, representing rather the indigenous construction of an "anti-ritualist" competitor or enemy.

In its cross-cultural survey of ritual experts this study is, to be sure, preliminary. I have offered here a spatial—center/periphery—model for understanding indigenous conceptions of ritual expertise, its powers and dangers. But the paper should also, hopefully, advance the basic issue of taxonomy in the history of religions—that is, the interpretive value and function of models and types—beyond the simple, *static* classifications of Weber and Van der Leeuw. The taxonomy of patterns of ritual expertise presented here purposely allows a certain fluidity among "types"—e.g., between community ritual experts local and peripheral, and between such experts and the quasi-institutional literati. This fluidity allows productive comparative analysis of those cases that lie at the interstices of these "types," and it best serves the understanding of popular spell-composition and amulet-dispensing. But one might propose further sub-categories according to different criteria: for example, according to an expert's form of relationship with some supernatural figure (possession? communication? ritual orientation?), or an expert's restriction to certain ritual forms or services (healing? spell-removal? exorcism? divination?), or the indigenous labels or role-distinctions held by various societies ("wise-woman," "conjure-doctor"; the separate roles *babalawo* and *elegun* among Yoruba of West Africa).[56]

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[56] Cf. Victor Turner, "Religious Specialists: An Anthropological View," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), 13:437-44. I am grateful to Ethel Sara Wolper, Funso Afolayan, and Jonathan Z. Smith for criticisms and suggestions on previous drafts.

FIAT MAGIA[1]

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Writing in the introduction to their 1995 volume, Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki enthusiastically draw attention to the "dramatic resurgence of interest" in the study of ancient magic.[2] It is, therefore, curiously ironic that in the midst of this renaissance, the number of voices categorically denying the existence of magic has been correspondingly on the rise as well. Indeed, a variety of methodologies are now pursued in the interest of purging scholarship of this unfortunate word.[3] After all, magic suffers from a tainted past and remains even to

[1] Several groups of people deserve my thanks for helping this paper come to fruition. Robert Knapp deserves credit for reviewing previous drafts both of this paper and its oral manifestation. Henk Versnel was an unswerving source of inspiration, and I profited greatly from both our many conversations and the seminar he gave as the Sather Professor at the University of California, Berkeley. My colleagues in that seminar were helpful as well not only because of their insightful and interesting contributions to the seminar in general, but also through their individual reactions to my thoughts on this topic. The comments and questions of Laura Gibbs at a critical stage were especially helpful. Lastly, and, perhaps most importantly, I should thank the several scholars whose work I specifically address here. Without their stimulating and thought-provoking contributions to the subject, I doubt that I would have been inspired to say much on the topic. Needless to say, my views are my own, and whatever opprobrium I merit should in no way attach to those who have helped birth this paper. Whether I myself have contributed in any way to the debate on magic, I leave for the reader to decide.

[2] Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden, 1995) 1-10; it is interesting to note that in the United States the growing interest in magic within academia has been considered a genuine, albeit alarming trend, by some. See Phyllis Schlaffly, "What College Tuition and Fees are Paying For!," *The Phyllis Schlaffly Report*, 32.4 (September 1998), <http://eagleforum.org/psr/1998/nov98/psrnov98.html>, which notes among the "bizarre and weirdo classes" being taught in America's universities, Columbia University's "Sorcery and Magic," Bucknell University's "Witchcraft and Politics," Stanford University's "Homosexuals, Heretics, Witches, and Werewolves: Deviants in Medieval Society," and Williams College's "Witchcraft, Sorcery, and Magic."

[3] A first concession must be made, namely, that the approaches to magic are manifold at this date, and only a few are considered in this paper. A useful field-guide to the theoretical issues is Graham Cunningham, *Religion and Magic* (New York, 1999). Taken as a field-guide and not an encyclopedia, this swift little volume is very handy. For a recent negative review, see Christopher I. Lehrich, "Graham Cunningham, Magic and Religion," <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/> (1999).

this day an ill-defined, evaluative concept that is hopelessly beyond redemption. To remedy the situation, then, some urge us to use the *emic* approach whereby we adopt the terms of the culture under study; some would have us substitute new words in place of the old; others opine that the field is better served by specific as opposed to generic comparisons. Far from denying the legitimacy of these approaches, it will be argued here that they are merely additional tools at the disposal of those interested in ancient magic, for they neither eliminate the need to use magic as a category nor do they fundamentally undermine its utility. Instead, these approaches represent shifts in emphasis with respect to the phenomena under study; they are largely matters of taste and as such cannot displace the school of thought that sees in magic a useful category. After all, even magic's greatest enemies are incapable of functioning without it.

As Evans-Pritchard noted more than fifty years ago in his seminal work, labels are essentially arbitrary.[4] There is no ontological connection between the word and the phenomena under consideration, for the object of inquiry retains its nature regardless of what we call it. This point is perhaps best illustrated in Tambiah's critique of Keith Thomas' landmark book, *Religion & the Decline of Magic*:[5]

> Thomas provides no analysis of the symbolism of magic and withcraft, and is equally insensitive to the performative features of ritual acts that are familiar to students of the linguistic philosophy of J. Austin and his followers. A narrow yardstick of "rationality" misses the rhetorical and illocutionary aspects of ritual performances.[6]

It is fortuitous that Tambiah uses the word "yardstick," for Thomas' choices and emphases are little more than metaphorical yardsticks in the measurement of the phenomena he evaluates. As such, Tambiah's unease with Thomas' failure to investigate the matter from Tambiah's own perspective is surely the equivalent of arguing the merits of the metric over the English system of measurement. The physical objects of measurement in such an instance remain the same, while the tools chosen for measuring necessarily yield different data. On that basis, all of us who fail to emphasize the approach esteemed by Tambiah, must fail in not producing the data that interest him. Thus, the critique is arbitrary. Rather, perhaps, the critique is per-

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[4] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*, (Oxford, 1937/1965) 11.

[5] Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York, 1971).

[6] Stanley J. Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion, and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge, 1990) 23-4.

sonal.[7] In his fascinating tract on protestant apologetics and their legacy within the study of religion, Jonathan Z. Smith frankly confesses the political nature of his own approach:

> Religious studies, with its bias towards the 'unique' and the 'total', expressed methodologically through its deep involvement in morphology, phenomenology and, more recently, in a morality of regard for local interpretations, has been a discipline profoundly and not unsurprisingly of the 'right'. The comparative endeavour herein described is relentlessly an affair of the 'left'.[8]

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[7] Indeed, Tambiah's bombastic comments on Frazer reach such a fevered pitch that their true value rests not in what they say about the latter, but rather in what they reveal about the former. Oddly enough, Wittgenstein, whom Tambiah quotes with adulous approval, is just as histrionic in his assessment of Frazer, yet his chauvinistic bigotry, the mere ravings of a disgruntled veteran of the defeated Austro-Hungarian Army, in no way detracts or, for that matter, taints the views he expresses. Rather, Tambiah merely brushes them off, while reserving criticisms of the same nature for Frazer (Tambiah, *op. cit.*, 51-64). In this connection, a quotation from Wittgenstein's diary is of interest. Having learned that the rumor of the German occupation of Paris was false, on October 25, 1914, Wittgenstein wrote, "[i]t makes me feel today more than ever the terribly sad position of our race—the German race. Because it seems to me as good as certain that we cannot get the upper hand against England. The English—the best race in the world—cannot lose. We, however, can lose and shall lose, if not this year then next year. The thought that our race is going to be beaten depresses me terribly, because I am completely German." (emphasis in original) Quoted in Martin Gilbert, *The First World War* (New York, 1994) 104.

[8] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine* (Chicago, 1994) 52-3; cf. with his salutory and incisive comments in *Map is not Territory* (Leiden, 1978) 297-8 and his warnings about the folly of evolution at p. 188. It is, therefore, something of a disappointment that Smith's own approach, while decidedly moralising, suffers from a lack of self-consciousness, especially with regard to its own evolutionary outlook. In one instance, having completed his assault on early views of Christianity as another permutation of the vegetation god scheme asserted by the barnstormers of 19th century anthropology to have existed in the religous practices of the ancient mediterranean, he concludes by saying: "...we must see the development of a richer and more widely spread notion of the 'dying and rising' of the central cult figure, alongside of the development of the implications of this for the cult member, in the second to fourth century Christianities as well as in the other contemporary religions of Late Antiquity, as analogous processes, responding to parallel kinds of religious situations rather than continuing to construct genealogical relations between them, whether it be expressed in terms of the former 'borrowing' from the latter, or, more recently, in an insistence on the reverse." (emphasis in original; *Drudgery*, 112-3). The underlying implication here, that individuals in similar circumstances respond in similar ways and develop along parallel tracks, is surely not too far from the determinism of an earlier day. Indeed, it is particularly striking that this conclusion follows on a previous conclusion which uses vocabulary employed by biologists of a by-gone era to describe the idea that "the stages of an organism's development correspond to the species' [evolutionary] history": "Both the formation of the Corpus [Paulinum] and the addition to Mark [of the resurrection narrative] appear to be late products of the mid-second century, thus recapitulating the process that has been observed in the case of other Late Antique cults" (*Drudgery*, 110-1). From this perspective, it seems that scholarly

While there is nothing inherently wrong with nakedly political approaches to various cultural or sociological phenomena, it is perhaps troubling that they are neither fully admitted nor always acknowledged. Indeed, the humanities being what they are, a field of inquiry into culture that is simultaneously dependent on culture or cultures, *viz.* the culture of the observer and the culture of the observed, will always suffer from this situation. It is, therefore, ironic, albeit perhaps inevitable, that modern critiques of magic's tendentious past, which really is *inter alia* a colonial past, on the one hand, foreground the cognitive superiority of abandoning magic,[9] and, on the other hand, leave in the background the political *cum* moral foundation to those arguments without ever exposing the criteria that have framed this politico-moral impulse.[10] At any rate, this tension between the use of magic and its abandonment in many ways demonstrates the arbitrary nature of labeling. Acknowledging this foremost, we can now turn to a few of the arguments advanced against the term and consider their effectiveness in militating against its usage.

Writing during the intellectually tenebrous 19th century, James Frazer posited a distinction between magic and religion on the basis of constraint and supplication. To be specific, Frazer says "[w]herever sympathetic magic occurs in its pure unadulterated form it assumes that in nature one event follows another necessarily and invariably without the intervention of any spiritual or personal agency."[11] Thus, the constraint. As to religion, Frazer: "[b]y religion,

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apologetics are largely ones of competing teleologies. For a clear explanation of recapitulation and its problems see Mark Ridley, *Evolution* (Cambridge, 1996) 587-9, quotation taken from p. 587. Cf. Tambiah's summary of Tylor (*op. cit.*, p. 44), Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, edd., *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco, 1994) 2-4, and Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA, 1997) 18, the latter of which states with striking assurance regarding the use of the word magic, "[t]here are only two possible attitudes: either a *modern* definition of the term is created and the *ancient* and *Frazerian* notions are resolutely cast aside, or...." (italics added). Viewing Frazer as representing simply a backward stage on the road to modern scholarship is surely no better than the evolutionarist crime of which Frazer has been convicted.

[9] Jonathan Z. Smith, "Trading Places," in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 13-27.

[10] Note how Smith uses the word "scholarship," the positive and approving connotation of which we cannot doubt, though its meaning and criteria remain mysteriously indistinct (*Drudgery*, 143). In broader terms, moral arguments for abandoning ideas about progress in human culture offer no objective means for coping with politically distasteful concepts such as slavery or tyranny. After all, if there is no such thing as progress, then having slaves or not having slaves are equivalent, and the extension of civil rights in America is hardly a progressive act.

[11] James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (New York, 1922/1958) 56.

then, I understand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life."[12] Thus, the supplication. On this basis, then, Frazer has articulated a reasonably clear basis for analyzing and classifying the phenomena he intends to examine.[13] It remains for him and those who adopt his criteria to apply them consistently.[14] It has been suggested that Frazer's position is Christian, if not Protestant,[15] in outlook. Fritz Graf in his recent book on Greco-Roman magic ends his summary of Frazer's position by portentously concluding, "the 'Christianocentric' character of this definition of religion is clear."[16] Indeed, apparent support for this view comes from no less tendentious a source than the *Catholic Catechism* which comments on magic thus:

> All practices of *magic* or *sorcery*, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural

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[12] Frazer, *op. cit.*, 58.

[13] *pace* Graf who refers to Frazer's working definition as "blurry" (*op. cit.*, 14).

[14] Thus, Ritner's sense that magic and religion cannot be viewed as incompatible due to the pervasiveness of *heka* within Egyptian religion hints, not at any fundamental problem with such a distinction, but rather at an unwillingness of the researcher to apply the categories. In the end, Ritner's working definition of magic is essentially Frazer's but in modern dress (Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* [Chicago, 1993] 28 and "Traditional Egyptian Religion," in Meyer and Mirecki *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 43-60). Needless to say, Frazer himself never saw magic and religion as two categories that never coexisted (Frazer, *op. cit.*, 56). It is, therefore, strange that Tambiah should appear to have missed this point. Whether this is due to lack of understanding or charity is hard to tell, but it is remarkable that he appears to contradict himself on the same page, when he summarizes Frazer's position (Tambiah, *op. cit.*, 53). For a clear and practical explanation for why one researcher eschews Frazer's approach, see Christopher A. Faraone, "The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells," in C. Faraone and Dirk Obbink, edd., *Magika Hiera* (New York, 1991) 3-32, esp. 20.

[15] Keith Thomas, *op. cit.*, 61: "the conventional distinction between a prayer and a spell seems to have been first hammered out, not by the nineteenth-century anthropologists, with whom it is usually associated, but by sixteenth-century Protestant theologians."

[16] Graf, *op. cit.*, 14. For classicists, of course, the Christian label is doubly damning, since Christianity is not merely evocative of an era in academe that many would prefer to forget, but Classics in particular still seeks to maintain the sharp divide between the enlightened paganism of antiquity and the zealous Christians who destroyed it as baldly stated by Gibbon in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York, n.d.) I: pp. 382-443 and esp. v. 3 pp. 863-80, where he lays out what in his view are the four causes of Rome's collapse. Of Christianity, having exonerated the barbarians, he says, "the reproach may be transferred to the Catholics of Rome. The statues, altars, and houses of the demons were an abomination in their eyes; and in the absolute command of the city, they might labour with zeal and perseverance to erase the idolatry of their ancestors." p. 866.

> power over others—even if this were for the sake of restoring their health—are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion.[17] (emphasis in original)

Graf's curious comment, however, which is as meaningful as "leftist" would be if applied to his own approach, calls to mind the old adage, "there's nothing new under the sun." Clement of Alexandria, writing before Protestant apologetics could burst into flame, for example, posited coercion as a distinguishing feature of magic in his *Exhortation to the Greeks*;[18] more significantly, the fact that several hundred years earlier, before either Clement or any Christian for that matter, virtually the same view was offered by the author of the hippocratic text, *On the Sacred Disease*,[19] surely weakens Graf's position just a little. From another quarter, Ann Jeffers also rejects Frazer's coercion criterion, but her objection is unconsciously, yet personally teleological. She states:

> ...Frazer was quite mistaken when he explained magic as a technique of coercion. Not one field anthropologist has ever met a "primitive" who believed he could alter the world.[20]

Obviously, this objection merely sets the stage for her argument in favor of the *emic*, which we shall consider shortly. More importantly, Frazer's is decidedly the approach of an outsider; it, therefore, is of no consequence whatsoever whether or not the texts under consideration or the individuals being interrogated attest to a belief in the ability to alter the world.[21] Nevertheless, it just so happens that the texts do bear witness to such a belief. Otherwise, it is hard to make sense of

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[17] *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New York, 1995) 570, §2117.

[18] G. W. Butterworth, *Clement of Alexandria* (LCL 92; Cambridge, MA 1982) 135: "[magicians] have enrolled [daemons] as their own servants, having made them slaves perforce by means of their incantations."

[19] G. P. Goold, *Hippocrates* (LCL 148; Cambridge,MA, 1998) II:145-6.

[20] Ann Jeffers, *Magic & Divination in Ancient Palestine & Syria* (Leiden, 1996) 7.

[21] Of course, as Jeffers does not define "primitive," it is hard to know whether anything considered here would ever be primitive enough. If, however, the word primitive is a substitute for preliterate, then we have no way of challenging her assertion. Needless to say, not even her own endeavor, an examination of magic in ancient Palestine through the investigation of vocabulary, could have any bearing on it. On that basis, her objection would have no relevance for her or for us. On a different level, surely a distinction is to be made between the certainty that one's efforts to manipulate nature magically will succeed, and the optimistic hope that they will. How this would affect Jeffers' analysis is again unclear as her terms are not adequately defined.

spells that purport to make the practioner invisible,[22] destroy cities,[23] or overpower the heart of a desired lover.[24] After all, if they were designed to fail, why bother using them at all?[25] On balance, then, Jeffers' critique is nugatory; as to the label, "christianocentric," it is hard to see this as anything more than the result of arbitrary selection.

That magic works *ex opere operato* is both implicit in Frazer's definition and another supposedly Christian derivation. Thomas in his fascinating book writes, "Words and prayers ... had no power in themselves, unless God chose to heed them; whereas the working of charms followed automatically upon their pronunciation."[26] Far from

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[22] See *PGM* I.247-62 in which the officiant is to say to the demon s/he conjures, "whatever I, NN, order you to do, /be obedient to me." Hans Dieter Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* (Chicago, 1992) 9; *Grimoirium Verum* (Seattle, 1997) 18-20; Gretchen Rudy, trans., *The Grand Grimoire* (Seattle, 1996) 39-40; Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites* (University Park, 1998) 59-61, 224-6.

[23] David Pingree, ed., *Picatrix* 18, "ymago ad destruendum civitatem" which tantalizingly says "and when you have thus made the representation (ymaginem), bury it in the middle of the city and you will see amazing things." In this connection, it is perhaps worthy of note that the notion of *sympatheia* in magical practice was acknowledged as well: "They say that to the extent that those who work the representation (imaginem) manipulate the same representation, to that extent the representation causes like experiences in those objects to which it has been ascribed just as the mind of the officiant commands." Cornelius Agrippa, *De Occulta Phil.* 2.49 cited in Louis Fahz, "De poetarum Romanorum doctrina magica" in *Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten* 2.3 (1904) 127-70, esp. 126 n. 1.

[24] Examples of this genre are legion. Just a few are cited here to make the point: J. F. Bourghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* (Leiden, 1978) no. 1, according to which the officiant shall threaten as follows: "if [the gods] fail to make her come after me I will set <fire to> Busiris and burn up <Osiris>!"; Benjamin R. Foster, *Before the Muses* (Bethesda, 1996) I:143-7; John G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York, 1992) 78-115; Kieckhefer, *op. cit.*, 82-6, 199-203. The words of Gwendolyn Leick regarding love magic in Mesopotamian culture are blunt: "[The purpose of love magic] is ... to gain power over another person, to force him, or her, to do what one desired." Gwendolyn Leick, *Sex and Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature* (London, 1994) 194. Leick cites more completely at pp. 198-9 the spell printed by Foster at p. 143. The two translations ought to be considered side by side as they have slight differences. Though Leick does not make the connection, the spell as she describes it is remarkably similar in sentiment, if not literarily evocative, of Theocritus, *Idyl* 2.

[25] While the answer can never be known, it is admirable that a few recent scholars have asked whether or not certain magical practices, in this case, curse tablets, worked. On this, see Gager, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-3 and R. O. Tomlin, *The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath* (Oxford, 1988) 2: 110-1, the latter of which writes in reference to the material found at Bath, "we are never told by a successful petitioner that they did [work], but the practice of inscribing [the objects] continued for two centuries, from the second to the fourth, which implies that they did work."

[26] Thomas, *ibid.*

being the result of Protestant analysis, however, the view that words had power goes back very far.[27] Naturally, though Christians would have been loath to acknowledge it, the creative logos is paradigmatically the efficacious word. Pliny the Elder as well, pagan that he was, also pondered this question. Writing in Book 30 of his *Natural History*, he says, "it is a matter of the greatest interest and ever one of uncertainty as to whether words and the recitation of verses have any power."[28] He later goes on to demonstrate the ancient (from his perspective) Roman belief in the power of words by citing two fragments of the *Twelve Tables*, Rome's earliest collection of laws, conventionally dated to c. 450 BC.[29] He cites various Roman customs which reveal not merely a belief in the efficacy of words, but even suggest the power to coerce the divine. Finally, he mentions literary authorities who attest to the power of the word: Homer, Theophrastus, Cato, Varro.[30] It is opportune that Homer is mentioned in this connection, as he tells in the *Odyssey* of the time that young Odysseus was hunting a wild-boar with his uncles. In the encounter, Odysseus killed the boar, but was gored in the thigh. His uncles jumped to heal his wound: "and with a spell (epaoide) they stopped the black blood."[31] Thus just two examples from "western" antiquity.[32] In Egypt, there is the famous story of Djedi, the powerful and legendary magician, who was fabled to be a contemporary of Khufu. According to the story, Hardjedef tells his father, Khufu, about Djedi, a powerful magician who can join the head of a severed

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[27] E.g., J. H. M. Strubbe, "Cursed be he that moves my bones," *Magika Hiera* 33-59, esp. 41-5.

[28] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, 28.2.10.

[29] Pliny, *op. cit.*, 28.4.17.

[30] Pliny, *op. cit.*, 28.4.18-21.

[31] Homer, *Odyssey* 19. 456-7; Pliny refers to the spell as a *carmen* or song (*op. cit.*, 28.4.21).

[32] It is certainly problematic to continue to speak of the western tradition in Greece as if Greek culture represented an intellectual island. Her debt to the Near East is obvious, and represents cultural continuity rather than insularity. Walter Burkert's work is a useful antidote to continued dialogue in such terms (W. Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution*, Cambridge, MA, 1992). In the field of ancient magic, Christopher Faraone's "The Mystodokos and the Dark-Eyed Maidens: Multicultural Influences on a Late-Hellenistic Incantation" is an exciting exploration of the intercultural implications (in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 297-333); likewise, Ritner's provocative suggestion that Greco-Roman defixiones and Egyptian letters to the dead are related, merits serious consideration (*Mechanics*, pp. 179-80). In the world of Greek literature, Nicander's *Theriaka* and *Alexipharmaka* cry out for analysis in light the Egyptian context, as do the Demotic Setne and Khamwas stories in light of the Greek context, see n. 32, *infra*.

animal to its body and resuscitate the victim. Khufu is thrilled at the prospect of seeing such a feat for himself, and immediately sends for Djedi. Having arrived, Djedi agrees to perform, and, as promised, he rejoins various decapitated animals to their severed members and causes them to amble about the palace. These amazing displays he accomplishes simply by uttering "his say of magic."[33] From the Bible, the magical competition between Moses, Aaron, and the Egyptian king's magicians is suggestive. The Hebrew text vaguely reports that "Pharaoh too summoned his wise men and sorcerers, and they themselves, the *hartumim* of Egypt, by means of their secrets performed accordingly,"[34] the critical word, *hartumim*, being on the basis of the Hebrew evidence alone of uncertain etymology and doubtful meaning. Traditionally, the word is related to *heret*, meaning a chisel, and on that basis, it has been assumed that this class of magicians were scribes of some sort. Regardless of the historical linguistic facts, the question is what the Jews themselves thought.[35] To determine that, it is possible to find assistance in the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate*. Both of these texts emphasize with relative consistency the relationship between *hartumim* and song, for the *Septuagint* renders the word as *epaoidoi* or "spell casters" and the *Vulgate* likewise refers to the use of spells by means of the word, *incantationes*. The fact that *hartumim* is later translated in the latter by *malefici*, the generic Latin for warlock,[36] and by the former by *pharmakoi*, the generic Greek for the same, speaks, not necessarily to a vague understanding of the translators,[37] but to the polyvalence of *hartumim* itself as a word which when taken in conjunction with two other words for magician, *hakhamim* and *mekhashfim*, is confined to its more precise meaning, but, when allowed to stand on its own, is given a more generic sense. At any rate, in light of this

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[33] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature* (Berkeley, 1975) I:215-22. Following Kurt Sethe, *Ägyptische Lesestücke* (Darmstadt, 1924/1959) 31: ʿhʿ-n *d*d-n *d*di *d*d.t.f m hk3.(w), lit. "then Djedi said what he says as magic". The phrase occurs several times in *P. Westcar*; see explication in Kurt Sethe, *Erläuterungen zu den Ägyptischen Lesestücke* (Leipzig, 1927) 36. This is not to say that the totality of *hk3* was speech, but to point out that as portrayed in *P. Westcar* speech is the operative feature. As far as literary texts go, *P. Westcar* is very circumspect about magical practice, especially compared with the Demotic story of Setne and Khamwas, which makes me wonder as to the interplay between Greek and Egyptian literary tradition, for the Greeks were usually uninhibited in their revelations about magical practice. Ritner, *op. cit.*, 38.

[34] Exodus 7:11.

[35] Jeffers offers an interesting, but inconclusive discussion (*op. cit.*, 44-9).

[36] As a concension to purists, it is to be observed that a true calque on warlock would be *sponsifrax vel sim.*

[37] *pace* Jeffers, *op. cit.*, 48.

evidence, there is a hint in Exodus that magic was marked by the use of the effective word. Moreover, on balance, the idea that *ex opere operato* is a Christian concept must be drawn into question, and one might fairly ask whether or not it actually does represent the facts of magic.

The third tack taken against magic is that of linguistic imprecision, which brings us back to the issue of labels *per se*. To quote a few examples of this critique,

> [t]he largest single family of theoretical, substantive definitions of "magic" [posit that] "magic" is "religion" or "science," this or that—or, less commonly, but for an excess of this or that.... This dominant understanding is an odd sort of definition. Not only does it break the conventional definitory rules..., but also because it is typically inconsistent in its application of differentia.... But if one cannot specify the distinctions with *precision*...the difference makes no difference at all.[38] (emphasis added)

> Depending upon an individual's predilection, the same text or act may be classified as "magical," "religious," or (most evasively) "magico-religious." The problem, especially for secular scholars, has been to determine just what factors should constitute ... the necessary and sufficient quotient which separates magic from religion, medicine, and science.[39]

> There seems to be no agreement among anthropologists on the use of the terms "magic" and "religion", so that these words cannot be relied upon as technical terms.[40]

Conceding *arguendo* that magic, defined as being marked by coercion, is ambiguous, there are two ways in which these critiques fail. First, they are critiques that, when taken to their logical conclusion, preclude the use of language, which is an unacceptable position for those of us who depend upon language to convey information; second, they express a dissatisfaction which rightly ought to be directed at those who inconsistently employ the term rather than at the term which is thus misused. The humanities are first and foremost not a science;[41]

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[38] Smith, "Trading Places" in Meyer and Smith, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 14-5.

[39] Ritner, "Traditional Egyptian Magic," in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 46.

[40] Jeffers, *op. cit.*, 7 n. 33.

[41] Smith's scientific agenda, made manifest through his use of biological vocabulary, implies a desire to put our discipline onto a more "objective" basis. There is nothing inherently problematic with this; it does, however, reflect a tacit faith in the superiority of the sciences which seems hard to maintain in light of the linguistic problems he enjoys exploring. Cf. *Drudgery Divine*, *passim*, but especially the comments at 36-7 and 47 n. 15; also, "Trading Places," *passim*.

although it may be desirable to classify phenomena symbolically such that we all cease to speak in terms of magic, but rather in terms of phenomena *d* and *z*, the fact remains, that, when we cannot even agree on the terms of our discussion, we are far from being able to reach any consensus on the symbols that might represent them. At any rate, language is the primary tool of our endeavors, and it is congenitally vague. Thus, it is hard to decide at what point we may stop removing words from our vocabulary on this basis. Are we, for example, to exclude "epic"? The problem is that, although certain poems are conventionally identified as epics, such as Vergil's *Aeneid* or Homer's *Iliad*, the question, what criteria allow them to be so classified, is not easy to answer. Plot will not do, for while by this measure we could be comfortable in classifying the *Aeneid*, *Iliad*, and *Gilgamesh* stories as epics, it does not account for didactic poetry such as Lucretius' *On the Nature of Things*. Meter also cannot be satisfactory as a criterion, for on that basis, the *Aeneid*, *Iliad*, and *On the Nature of Things* can be designated as epics, but *Gilgamesh* cannot.[42] Indeed, the very notion of what is a poem[43] is also becoming more imprecise. Today, a poem may be indistinguishable from a piece of prose save by using the criterion of page layout. Epic and poetry are merely two examples from many that could be produced to demonstrate that the stock and trade of the humanities consist of imprecise, ambiguous, and indefinable concepts and terms. The exploration of these problems also reveals a certain hypocrisy. Apparently, on the one hand, we are to abandon magic for its ambiguities, but other words are allowed to stand. Yet the principle that ambiguous terms or inconsistently applied categories must be avoided demands that we *consistently* apply it everywhere. Otherwise, it is simply an arbitrary process.

To cope with the problems of magic, a variety of approaches have been implemented. One which has proven especially attractive is that of the *emic*, whereby the observer seeks to become one of the observed by culturally immersing him or herself. This technique, it is suggested, helps strip the scholar of his own cultural biases and allows for a more profound and sympathetic understanding of the target culture. Thus writes Jeffers: "it would seem that a society must be approached as 'objectively' as possible and that means swapping our own world-view for that of the people whose system we study, by

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[42] Those who advocate an *emic* approach should shudder at the thought of describing *Gilgamesh* or the *Enuma Elish* as epics, given the word's strictly Greco-Roman application.

[43] "Poem" is another word which should be shunned by partisans of the *emic*.

becoming an insider, a thoroughly 'subjective' observer."[44] The *emic* approach is extremely valuable in that it does help one to understand what the individuals under consideration thought of themselves and the acts they were performing. It does not, however, displace the *etic* nor is it so opposed that the *etic* and the *emic* cannot exist simultaneously. Indeed, they necessarily must, given the fact that the researcher can never fully shed his or her native culture.[45] Happily, an illustration of the *emic-etic* question is brilliantly illustrated by a passage from *Don Quixote*.[46] Riding along in the company of the faithful Sancho Panza, the man from La Mancha spots some 30 or 40 windmills in the distance. Pointing to "the impudent giants" in the distance, he announces to Sancho his intention "to do battle and deprive them of their lives." "What giants?" is Sancho's response. This is precisely the question of the *emic* and the *etic*. Cervantes presents us here with a certain reality which is the 30 or 40 windmills. For Don Quixote the windmills do not represent giants; they actually are giants. For Sancho Panza, they are windmills. The *emic* approach would invite us to join with Don Quixote in seeing the windmills as giants. The *etic* would have us side with Sancho. This is not to place an ethical or

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[44] Jeffers, *op. cit.*, 14 and stated differently but with equal force at pp. 3, 7, 16, 22; cf. Graf, *op. cit.*, 18 where he argues that his *emic* approach will both use the word magic and avoid the ethnological notions of the term even though magic itself *is* ethnic. Of course, the use of terms like magic to describe western magic always leave one in doubt as to whether an *emic* or *etic* approach is being undertaken. An interesting example of the former within the European context is proposed by Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA 1997) 8-17, wherein he details his plan to use "native" concepts of natural and demonic magic.

[45] Consider, for example, the problem of *veneficium* in Latin. The word etymologically refers to the manufacture of certain substances which, when administered to an individual, affect his or her nature. *Veneficium* can be the making of a medicament, a poison, or a potion. Eventually, the word refers to what we would call magic, and it is often translated that way. A problem arises when one resolves to write about these ritual practices that are regularly considered magic. If taking an *emic* approach, how can one decide whether or not Cicero's *Pro Caelio* and the *Apology* of Apuleius are on the same footing? They both touch upon *veneficium*, yet the *Pro Caelio* is a case of poisoning and Apuleius is defending himself on a charge of witchcraft. It is not sufficient to say that the ambiguity of the word means that we should follow the Romans in viewing both as species of the same thing, *veneficium*. After all, in French, the word *histoire* sometimes means history and sometimes means story, yet it does not follow that this dual-meaning of the word leads to an intellectual inability on the part of the French to distinguish the two. Just so, *veneficium* need not mean that the Romans saw the speeches of Cicero and Apuleius as concerned with the same activity. Practically speaking, in the case of ancient languages only an *etic* sense that operates above the entire *emic* process allows the researcher to make choices in this regard, and those choices are necessarily made.

[46] Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (Barcelona, 1985) I:81-2.

moral value on the *emic* approach. Rather, it is to say that the *emic* approach produces data which are fundamentally different from the data which result from an *etic* one. In this case, the data relate to Don Quixote's particular worldview. On this basis, then, it is impossible to follow Jeffers in her assessment that the *emic* is somehow intellectually superior.[47] Furthermore, and this especially pertains to those who study the ancient world, there is the problem of having an accurate understanding of the ancient culture. As it is, our command of the languages is tenuous at times[48] and when less so, it is hard to see how we ever escape the problem of translation, whether the process is conscious or not. Ultimately, the *emic* approach as it relates to the ancients runs the risk of being no more than an illusion. Though not hopeless, it can be rather limited.

Another way of coping with magic and its problems is to recast the category with different words. In its gentler form, this becomes "magico-religion;"[49] in its stronger manifestation, it becomes "ritual power" or "unsanctioned religious activity" to cite two examples.[50] In support of "ritual power," Meyer and Smith come dangerously close to adopting the coercion criterion that marked Frazer's magic:

> [a]lthough many, perhaps most, rituals can be discussed in terms of empowerment or power relations, the texts in this volume are overt in their *manipulation of power and force*. Deities are summoned "by the power of" a talisman, a name, or the power of another divinity.... "Texts of ritual power," then, appears to be a fitting description. (emphasis added)[51]

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[47] In point of fact, as she has framed it, the *emic* has troubling implications. To understand Nazism, one should, it would seem, become a Nazi, yet very small would be the number of scholars willing to engage in this application of the *emic*. Stated less emphatically, the *emic* would have us refrain from calling the work of al-Tabari, "the Arab Livy," anything but *ta'arikh* since the Arabs do not have history. Likewise, we should refrain from ever speaking of medicine among the Egyptians. After all, history and medicine both have a long western tradition behind them, and it is hard to see how, if magic is assumed to inflict its problems on foreign cultures to which it is applied, the use of words like medicine and history do not. Ultimately, the *emic*, taken to its limit, is an isolationist position that denies cross-cultural comparison.

[48] Woe to those who study Sumerian! See, for example, Marie-Louise Thomsen, *The Sumerian Language* (Copenhagen, 1991) 144-5 or 182-3.; likewise cf. two translations of the *Hymn to Nanshe*, that of Wolfgang Heimpel in William W. Hallo, ed., *The Context of Scripture* (Leiden, 1997) I:526-31 and that of Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps that Once...* (New Haven, 1987) 126-42.

[49] This locution is a fork in the road leading either to pure euphemism or to the evaporation of magic altogether, which shall be considered shortly.

[50] Meyer and Smith, *op. cit.*; Phillips, *op. cit.*, *passim*. Gager's decision to use the phrase "binding spells" is on the cusp of being but the merest euphemism. The phrase goes unexplained in his discussion of definition, so it is difficult to see precisely the reasoning behind it (*op. cit.*, 24-5).

[51] Meyer and Smith, *op.cit.*, 5.

In light of this description, it seems hard not to view this as magic by a different name. When Phillips suggests that we moderns turn our attention not towards magic as we see it, but towards unsanctioned religious activity which, incidently, includes magic under both ancient and modern rubrics, it becomes difficult to see how this is not merely a euphemism, albeit cast rather broadly.[52] Of course, the substitution of a broader, more nebulous category for magic brings with it the problem of being so extended as to be meaningless. Thus, when Smith determines that the one characteristic of magic is its illegality,[53] it is not merely an incorrect formulation because it fails in its claim to universality,[54] but it begs the question as to what qualifies as magic within the culture,—an *emic* question—and implies a circularity that says the test of magic is whether or not it is illegal, thereby encouraging us to suspect the presence of magic in that which is deemed illegal. Ultimately, if magic as a category fails, so must its euphemistic substitutes because as euphemisms they repackage the same problems that inhere to the word they replace.

The last strategy for dealing with magic is to abandon it and its substitutes altogether. Rather than fall victim to the problems that come with either trying to define the word precisely, which in any event is impossible, or create new phraseology that will function with greater reliability, we are urged to avoid any attempt to define the genus and instead focus on the species.[55] Smith writes:

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[52] Phillips, *op. cit.*, 269.

[53] Smith, *Map is Not Territory*, 192.

[54] Not only was magic not illegal in Egypt, its proscription in Athenian law is extremely doubtful, and its prohibition is very late in Roman law. In Egypt, the so-called *Harem Conspiracy*, which was essentially a instance of thwarted assassination, is a rare example of a legal case in which magic happened to be a factor. No law from Athens survives in which magic is outlawed, efforts to subsume it under *asebeia* (impiety) notwithstanding (the *Teian Curses* are, first, an oath, and, only secondly, a rare example of official pronouncements regarding magical practices from some Greek nomothetic tradition); at Rome, the *Twleve Tables* and the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis* touched only upon magical practice insofar as that practice infringed upon rights of persons or property. In other words, throughout the Republic and the early years of the Empire, Roman law was virtually silent about magic *per se*.

[55] Alternatively, we can simply collapse religion and magic together as Smith does when he defines religion thus, "[r]eligion is the quest, within the bounds of the human, historical condition, for the power to manipulate and negotiate ones (sic) 'situation' so as to have 'space' in which to meaningfully dwell." The phrasing runs ominously close to being an amalgam of coercion and supplication (*Map is Not Territory*, 291). This, of course, is the position demanded by the U. S. Constitution's Second Amendment. For an interesting story of the controversies to which this can give rise, see Hanna Rosin, "Army witches stir controversy," *Contra Costa Times*, June 12, 1999.

> I see little merit in continuing the use of the substantive term "magic".... We have better and more precise scholarly taxa for each of the phenomena commonly denotated by "magic" which, among other benefits create more useful categories for comparison. For any culture I am familiar with, we can trade places between the corpus of materials conventionally labeled "magical" and corpora designated by other generic terms (e.g. healing, divining, execrative) with no cognitive loss.[56]

To follow Smith's lead, the system proposed here is essentially taxonomic, which, as explored earlier, is problematic on its own. Leaving that issue aside, one wonders why terms like "divining" and "execrative" which, like magic, have their own historical and linguistic reality in Western tradition, are deemed superior. More to the point, what is sought here is an examination of the specific subcategories within what is traditionally referred to as magic. In other words, in taxonomic terms, magic is potentially a genus, and within that genus are the species, healing, divining, execrative texts. At this stage, this process encourages us to deny any broader relation among the species, which would be akin to studying Indo-European but conceding no broader relationship between French and Spanish, and, *a fortiori*, between the Slavic and Italic branches. While, as Smith argues, this is positive because it allows for comparisons between other healing, divining, and execrative texts from other cultures, it seems uncertain, if not doubtful, that this represents a movement away from the problems that come with magic. In some sense, this is functionally equivalent to the euphemistic impulse in that it seeks to displace the offending category with ones deemed inoffensive. The results too do not seem particularly promising as it is easy to see that after magic is out of the picture, the new categories, once regnant, will through the normal course of scholarly discussion necessarily undergo magic's fate. In the end, however, we shall have to ask whether or not the boundaries of these acceptable categories can be successfully maintained. After all, the notion of healing, which is to say, the notion of medicine, too has its own difficulties. While the case of the Gadarene swine, for example, is typically identified as an example exorcism, it surely can also be interpreted as healing.[57] Conversely, Varro's remedy for foot pain, in which he addresses the

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[56] Smith, "Trading Places" in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 16-7; this position is explicitly staked out by Gager as well, although see comment at n. 50, *supra*.

[57] Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:26-37.

disease, is typically interpreted as a case of healing,[58] although one might make a case for it as an instance of exorcism. It seems that the problems that come with magic attend taxonomic approaches as well. But then, taxonomy is as language dependent as magic ever was.

Magic is here to stay. The purpose here has not been to deny the legitimacy of the critiques that have been leveled against it. On the contrary, every specific case considered has been valuable in helping scholars move away from the highly negative and evaluative use of magic that has held sway in our field. A. A. Barb's "The Survival of the Magic Arts," with its caustic treatment of the subject, and Adolf Erman's prejudicial remarks in *Die Religion der Ägypter* could neither be given weight today nor can they be anything but evidence of how far along the debate has come.[59] The position taken here, then, is one of optimism. Far from being rendered useless, magic is a category that has been the subject of serious negotiation for more or less the past one hundred years, and as such, is gradually being worked into a tool of real utility for scholars. It is not the only tool, however. The fruits of that debate have also placed at our disposal the *emic* approach and reconfigurations of materials within the category of magic. Not all tools demand use; rather, each student of magic in the ancient world is free to make his or her choices. Each of us can now pick those methodologies and terms that suit our interests and provide us with the means to analyze what we find interesting about the materials we consider. On this basis, while there is still much collective work to do, a lot has been done, and we can all approach magic from a variety of perspectives. Therefore, let there be magic.

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[58] Varro, *Res Rusticae*, 1.2.27 (Keil). The remedy of Varro (#55) and many others are conveniently collected in the well-known dissertation of Richard Heim, *Incantamenta magica Graeca Latina* (Leipzig, 1892).

[59] See Barb's study in A. Momigliano, *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1963) 100-25; A. Erman, *Die Religion der Ägypter* (Berlin, 1934/1968) 295-96.

PART THREE

THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

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DIVIDING A GOD

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How does it happen that the same god or goddess is worshipped in more than one place? Normally we think of some local deity being syncretized to the nearest equivalent in a national pantheon. But among the Hittites there was another way of having one god in two places, and this shall be the subject of this paper.

One of the best preserved and well known of Hittite rituals is variously known as "The Transfer or Resettlement of the Black Goddess".[1] In 1968, Carruba showed that the Sumerian word sign translated "black" actually in this case stands for the word "night".[2] Thus we should understand the deity to be "Goddess of the Night." The ritual makes clear that there is an old temple where the deity was and a new temple where the deity will be. The colophon of the ritual tablet tells us that it was written by the priest of the Goddess of the Night "when someone *šarra*-s the Goddess of the Night separately". The culmination of the ritual happens when the deity is told to *šarra*-herself. A later revision of the ritual refers back to "when my ancestor Tudḫaliya, the Great King, *šarra*-d the Goddess of the Night from Kizzuwatna city (in the anti-Taurus Mountains of Cilicia)[3] and made

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[1] KUB 29.4 + KBo 24.86 w. dupl. KUB 29.5, KUB 12.23, KBo 16.85 + KBo 15.29 (+) KBo 8.90 (+) KUB 29.6 + KUB 32.68 + KBo 34.79, ed. H. Kronasser, *Die Umsiedelung der schwarzen Gottheit: Das hethitische Ritual KUB XXIX 4 (des Ulippi)*, [= *Schw. Gotth.*] SÖAW 241/3 (Vienna: Der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1963).

[2] *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* [=RlA] 3 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968):355 s.v. ^{d}GI$_6$. This is based on DINGIR-*LUM* GE$_6$-*ŠI ŠA* ^{URU}*Parnašša* KBo 2.8 i 17. The *-LUM* phonetic complement shows that the DINGIR is a word "god" and not a divine determinative. The *ŠI* phonetic complement shows that the GE$_6$ must be read as *mūši*, the genitive of the Akkadian *mūšu* "night", rather than Akk. *salmu* (or Hittite *dankuiš*) "black".

[3] It is usually assumed that Kizzuwatna City is the same as Kummanni (= Classical Comana Cataoniae, = modern Şahr) since the names frequently interchange in texts. (G. del Monte and J. Tischler, *Die Orts- und Gewässernamen der hethitischen Texte*, Répertoire Géographique des Textes Cunéiformes 6 [Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert, 1978] 213, 221). Kizzuwatna-City was the capital of the independent state of Kizzuwatna which was subjected to Ḫattuša by Tudḫaliya II, (see R. Beal, "The History of Kizzuwatna and the Date of the Šunaššura Treaty," *Orientalia* NS 55 (1986) 424-445.

her separately in Šamuḫa[4] (probably in the vicinity of modern Sivas).[5] A different text reads: "Then, during the reign of my brother (Muwattalli II), I (Prince Ḫattušili) *šarra*-d Šaušga of Šamuḫa and made her new temples in Urikina".[6]

The verb *šarra*- has long been known by Hittitologists to have two clusters of meaning (1) "to cross (a line or boundary), from which is derived "to transgress (an oath)" and (2) "to divide". The former ("to cross, transgress") was thought to be always accompanied by the locative sentence particle *-kan*, while the latter ("to divide") lacks the *-kan*.[7] The *šarra*- that the deity is told to do to herself has the *-kan* and so should mean "to cross or transgress". This clearly makes no sense in the passage in the "Goddess of the Night" ritual. With the *-kan*-less *šarra*-'s meaning equally problematical, the translators resorted to *ad hoc* translations.[8]

The verb *šarra*- in these texts has thus been translated "transfer"[9] and "remove, move away"[10] by the main text's editor, Heinz Kronasser. This makes sense in an oracular inquiry: "The goddess who was determined by oracle to be *šarra*-d, [was determined by oracle] to be carried to Zitḫara. She will be placed(?)[11] in her inner chamber."[12] However, when I was writing the dictionary article on

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[4] KUB 32.133 i 2-4, ed. Kronasser, *Schw. Gotth.* 58.

[5] G. del Monte and J. Tischler, *RGTC* 6:339f.

[6] KUB 21.17 ii 5-8.

[7] J. Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1952) 183.

[8] In addition to the usual translations cited below in nn. 9, 10, see also, A. Goetze, *The Hittite Ritual of Tunnawi*, AOS 14 (New Haven: AOS, 1938) 45, who translates *šarra*- with the reflexive particle *-za* as "to take possession of". It is true that all of our passages which contain a finite verb also contain the *-za*, but so do many other passages where the "taking possession" has just been stated with another verb such as "to plunder" *šaruwai*- (KUB 17.21 iii 1-3) or "to steal" *taya*- (KUB 40.91 iii 8-12, followed by a statement that there were three shares of 20 shekels each) and where a translation "divide up" makes the best sense. Goetze gave up his translation when he later translated KUB 17.21 in J. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950) 399.

[9] "umsiedeln", *Schw. Gotth.* (1963) 53 followed by among others O. Carruba, "$^{d}GI_{6}$", *RlA* 3 (1968) 355 ("verlegen"), R. Lebrun, *Samuha: Foyer religieux de l'empire hittite* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1976) 29 "transférer."

[10] "entfernen, amovere" *Etymologie der hethitischen Sprache* 1 (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1966) 504, 531-33, following A. Goetze, *Kizzuwatna and the Problem of Hittite Geography*, Yale Oriental Series Researches 22 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940) 24 and followed by Del Monte & Tischler, RGTC 6 (1978) 214 "wegbringen".

[11] Reading traces *pé-e-du-ma-an-z*[*i* SIXSA-*a*]*t* [*t*]*i*-[*a*]*n*-ʿ*zi-ya*ʾ-*aš*-*ši* <*I*>-[*M*]*A* É.ŠÀ=*ŠA*. Collation by H. A. Hoffner shows no space between the É.ŠÀ and the following *ŠA*.

[12] KUB 5.6 ii 70-72; *šarra*- is understood as "abgebrochen" by F. Sommer, *Die Ahhijavā-Urkunden*, ABAW NF 6 (1932) 285.

this verb a little over twelve years ago,[13] I grew suspicious of the by now traditional translation. The same oracular inquiry that we just quoted says several paragraphs later: "They will leave the goddess there for His Majesty and there he will *šarra-* her."[14] It makes little sense to take a deity to a place and then leave her there for the king to transfer her there—she's already there. More importantly, there were historical problems: Tudḫaliya II[15] goes to great lengths in his treaty with Kizzuwatna[16] to stress that Kizzuwatna was an independent country, which had come over to the Hittites voluntarily and the treaty between the two states is almost equal. It would not fit this supposedly equal relationship for Tudḫaliya to have removed a deity to Ḫatti from Kizzuwatna's very capital. Even less likely would Prince Ḫattušili have been able to remove the chief goddess, Šaušga, of one of Hatti's biggest cities to a smaller place, Urikina. Furthermore, as we have already noted, the translations of *šarra-* in these texts were entirely *ad hoc*, invented specifically for these passages, and bearing little or no relationship to the known meaning of the verb in other contexts.

Finally, Hittite has other ways with which to describe the transferring of gods from one place to another. Ḫattušili III says that his brother "picked up (*šara dā-*) [the gods] and ancestors from Ḫattuša (the old capital) and carried (*peda-*) them [to Tarḫuntašša (the new capital)]."[17] Elsewhere in describing the same event he uses the verb *arḫa arnu-* "to carry off" literally "to cause to arrive away". "I was [not involved] in the order to transfer the gods (DINGIR.MEŠ-*aš arn*[*ummaš*])."[18]

[13] Finished 3-31-87. A fine new translation of the main text subsequently made by my then office colleague, B. J. Collins, in *The Context of Scripture*, ed. W. W. Hallo, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 173-177, based on my CHD manuscript correctly translates the key word.

[14] KUB 5.6 iii 27.

[15] One presumes that Tudḫaliya II is meant since Muršili II calls him "my ancestor". If Tudḫaliya III, who actually directly controlled Kizzuwatna, had been meant Muršili would presumably have called him "my grandfather". For Tudḫaliya III being Muršili's grandfather, see S. Alp, "Die hethitischen Tontafelentdeckungen auf dem Maşat-Höyük", *Belleten* 44/173 (1980) 56f. For the history of Ḫatti's relationship with Kizzuwatna see R. Beal, "The History of Kizzuwatna and the Date of the Šunaššura Treaty," *Orientalia* NS 55 (1986) 424-445, esp. 439-440, but needing to be modified since the incorrect translation of *šarra-* was used there.

[16] Translated by G. Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, Writings from the Ancient World 7 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 13-22.

[17] *The Apology of Hattušili III* ii 102, ed. H. Otten, *Die Apologie Hattusilis III*, Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten 24 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1981) 10f.

[18] KUB 14.7 i 7-8, ed. P. Houwink ten Cate, *Anatolian Studies Presented to Hans Gustav Güterbock*, Publications de l'Institut historique et archéologique néelandais de Stamboul 35 (Leiden, 1974) 125f.

So, aside from the presence of the *-kan*, what is the problem with a meaning "to divide"? The presence of the *-kan* is not an insurmountable problem. A look through the examples of the verb *šarra-* yields the passage: "If you ever take the god's food offering, ... and do not bring it to him, but you only give it halfway. ["Half" is literally "middle division" the latter noun being *šarra-*, a noun related to our verb.] Let this business of dividing (*šarrumaš*, verbal noun) be a capital offense for you. Do not divide (*šarra-*) it. Whoever divides (*šarra-*) it dies."[19] In the last two sentences the verb *šarra-* is accompanied by a *-kan*. One could translate "Do not transgress it. Whoever transgresses it dies," with the "it" referring vaguely to the "matter", but considering that nouns derived from the verb "to divide" were found earlier in the passage, it seems better to follow the precedent of both previous translations[20] of this text and assume that despite the presence of the *-kan*, the verb *šarra-* means "divide". Even clearer is the sentence: "Then they divide up (*šarra-*) wine from the temple of Maliya from (lit. of) three wine vessels," and they carry it to five temples in different vessels.[21] Here the sentence contains a *-kan*, but the meaning cannot be "cross, transgress", and so must be "divide". The exact nuance of *-kan*, which by this later period of the language had absorbed the function of what were once five separate "locative" particles, is still indistinctly understood by Hittitologists. It is entirely possible, though not yet demonstrable that while the meaning of *šarra-* to cross had always required a *-kan*, the usage with the goddess would, if we ever find this usage in an older phase of the language, show one of the four other sentence particles whose usage later was absorbed by *-kan*.

The translation of *-kan šarra-* with object a deity as "to divide a deity" is supported by the fact that the Hittite introduction to the ritual for the Deity of the Night specifically says that "from that temple of the Deity of the Night he builds another temple of the deity of the Night, and then he settles the deity separately."[22] The word

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[19] KUB 13.4 i 50, 56-59 (instructions for temple personnel, pre-NH/NS).

[20] E. Sturtevant and G. Bechtel, *A Hittite Chrestomathy*, (Philadelphia: Linguistic Society of America, 1935) 150f.; A. Süel, *Hitit Kaynaklarında Tapınak Görevlileri ile ilgili bir Direktif Metni*, Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Yayınları 350 (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Basımevi, 1985) 30f. ("bölerse" [= "divides, separates"]).

[21] *namma=kan* GEŠTIN *IŠTU* É ^{d}*M*[(*aliya*)] *ŠA* 3 DUG GEŠTIN *šarranzi* KUB 20.49 i 1-2(-8) (*ḫišuwa*-fest., MH/NS), restored from KBo 20.114 vi 9-10(-20).

[22] i 3-4.

"separately" (*ḫanti*) was incorrectly translated "elsewhere"[23] by Kronasser since it made no sense with his translation "transfer".

So what of the ritual of the Goddess of the Night? Hittite is one of the world's few nonsexist languages, so we would not actually know this was a goddess for sure if it were not for the fact that she wears a *kureššar* ("shawl"), a typical piece of Hittite feminine headgear,[24] and that she is addressed with the feminine form of an Akkadogram *tarâmī* "you (f.sg.) love".[25] Since 1968, most other scholars have accepted Carruba's interpretation and the argument has shifted to whether this "Goddess of the Night" is an entirely separate deity or a form of a deity better known by some other name and if so, which one.[26]

Lebrun[27] suggests equating DINGIR GE_6 with *IŠTAR*/Šaušga a

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[23] Kronasser, *Schw. Gotth.* 6f. "anderswo"; cf. 40. For the same reason Puhvel, *HED* 3:92 invents a meaning "instead" for *ḫanti* in this passage.

[24] iv 30.

[25] iii 45, see Kronasser, *Schw. Gotth.* 40.

[26] H. Otten, *Ein hethitisches Festritual* (KBo XIX 128), StBoT 13 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1971) 45f. shows that DINGIR GE_6 is sometimes, at least, to be read Išpanza "Night", based on parallel lists of gods, where it follows the Moongod and the Star. A. Archi, "Il culto del focolare presso gli ittiti," *Studi micenei ed egeo-anatolici* 16 (1975) 79f. notes a deity Išpanzašepa "Night-spirit" who occurs in much the same company in some texts as Išpanza does in others so that the two seem to be variants of one another.

In the Vow of Puduḫepa (text assembled by H. Otten and Vl. Souček, *Das Gelübde der Königen Puduḫepa an die Göttin Lelwani*, StBoT 1 [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965]) a woman's name is in one place written DINGIR.GE_6-wiya (i.e., Nightdeity-wiya) i 17 (in A i 17, C i 3) and in another place (and in a different copy) written ^{d}30-wiya (i.e., Moongod-wiya) S i 8 = combined iii 33. This led E. Laroche, *Recueil d'onomostique hittite* (Paris, 1951) 78, *Les noms des hittites* (Paris, 1966) 40 s.v. Armawiya, followed by Carruba, *RlA* 3 (1968) 355 to equate DINGIR GE_6 with the Moongod. A. Goetze, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 20 (1966) 51, casts doubt on the equation. In any case, Otten's list, mentioned above, has DINGIR GE_6 listed separately from the Moongod, so even if "god of the night" could be used as an epithet of the Moongod and even as a way of writing Moongod, at other times "god(dess) of the night" was a separate deity. Since our ritual concerns a goddess, in this case, at least, there is no question of DINGIR GE_6 being the Moongod, who was a male for the Hittites.

A. Ünal, "The Nature and Iconographical Traits of 'Goddess of Darkness'", *Aspects of Art and Iconography: Anatolia and its Neighbors. Studies in Honor of Nimet Özgüç* (Ankara: Türk Tarih *Kurumu Basımevi*, 1993) 639-644, argues that "the goddess of darkness" (sic) is to be equated with the demoness Lamaštu. However the fragmentary text employed by Ünal, KUB 55.24, probably records a dream describing a Lamaštu-like demoness in the temple of DINGIR GE_6. Had the dreamer simply seen DINGIR GE_6 there would have been no reason to describe the form of the creature seen, but it could have simply been said that DINGIR GE_6 was seen. And, there would be no reason to throw out all the evidence associating DINGIR GE_6 with night time things, dreaming and being a respectable deity, that had been assembled by earlier scholars.

[27] *Samuha, foyer religieux de l'empire hittite*, Publications de l'institut orientaliste de Louvain 11 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1976) 28-31.

goddess also resident in Šamuḫa. *IŠTAR*'s Mesopotamian counterpart was, among other things, both the evening and morning star, so it would make some sense for *IŠTAR* in this form to be called "the goddess of the night". Especially convincing for our particular ritual is the fact that the cult statue of "the goddess of the night" gets a suit of male clothing and a suit of female clothing,[28] which would be particularly appropriate to *IŠTAR*/Šaušga who is either female or male,[29] depending on whether she appears as the morning or the evening star. Also significant is the fact that, of the cult centers of Mesopotamia, from which the goddess is summoned in the course of the ritual,[30] at least three (Akkad, Babylon and Ḫursagkalamma) are associated with the cult of the goddess Ištar.

Before the Goddess of the Night can be divided, she has to have a new home. While they are building the new temple, they manufacture the cult statue and various ritual paraphernalia. The statue is to be made of gold encrusted with silver, gold and semiprecious stones such as lapis, carnelian, alabaster and "Babylon-stone", that is to say cast glass. This is to be made identical in every respect to the statue of the goddess which already exists.[31] As we shall see, however, there is one difference—the old goddess wears a white shawl and the new goddess a red one.

A number of items of interest appear among the ritual paraphernalia. Besides the statue itself, the goddess has a gold sun disk called Pirinkir,[32] a gold navel and a pair of gold *purka* (apparently a body part) inlaid with cast glass. These tiny objects have their own carrying case of stone inlaid with gold and semiprecious stones. Several of the goddesses' broaches are made of iron inlaid with silver (no doubt in niello technique), a reminder that in the second millenium, iron was still a precious metal. She is also provided with musical instruments, boxwood or ivory combs, two sets of clothing for her cross-dressing, an assortment of tables, chairs and footstools, and a small bronze basin to be used when she is bathed. Her privacy is to be protected with tapestries made from all five colors of wool and hung from bronze pegs fastened to either side of the entranceway to her courtyard.[33]

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[28] §8 i 44-50.

[29] I. Wegner, *Gestalt und Kult der Ištar-Šawuška in Kleinasien*, AOAT 36 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981) 41f.

[30] §24 iii 43-44.

[31] §§1-2.

[32] The goddess is often found in the company of Šaušga. See V. Haas, *Geschichte der hethitischen Religion*, Handbuch der Orientalistik I/15 (Leiden: Brill, 1994) 415f.

[33] §§3-8.

On the second day before sunrise they bring strands of red, blue and natural yarn, fine-oil,[34] a shekel of silver, a bolt of *gazarnul*-fabric, three pieces of thin-bread and a jug of wine from the house of the founder of the new temple. They go to where the waters of purification are and collect purification water.[35]

A separate ritual for the Pirinkir, from which we may probably reconstruct the "waters of purification" ritual, has as follows. "The *katra*-woman takes one *ḪALTIKKUTU*-vessel, two thin breads, one pitcher of wine and a bit of fine oil and she goes to draw the waters of purification. When she arrives at the well, she breaks up thin breads and throws them down into the well. She libates wine down in and drips fine oil down in. Then she draws water and brings it up to the portico and places it on wicker potstands. To the *ḪALTIKKUTU*-vessels she ties a linen *gazarnul*, one strand of blue, one strand of green and one strand of [...] yarn and one shekel of silver."[36] Our ritual was presumably similar, except that the yarn was red, blue and natural. The object of the offerings to the well is to pay it for the water used in the ritual. Part of what is tied to the water vessels (perhaps, to judge from the "wool" determinitive which usually precedes it, just the braided strand of wool) forms a housing for the deity, known in Hittite as an *uliḫi*.[37]

The purification water is taken from the new temple to the old temple. The water is to spend the night on the roof of the old temple, sleeping beneath the stars. They take red wool and stretch it out in seven directions, thus forming seven paths for the deity. Each path is extended using the fine oil. The deity is asked to return from the mountain, from the river, from the plain, from the heavens and from the ground.[38] Having thus pulled the deity into the *uliḫi* from wherever she happens to be hanging out, they bind this woolen *uliḫi* onto the deity's statue. The rest of the day is spent collecting the necessary materials for the next day's ritual.[39]

The following morning at dawn with the stars still standing in the sky (that is the morning of the third day) the water is brought down

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[34] The Sumerogram Ì.DÙG.GA literally means "fine oil". It is unclear whether this actually meant "(oil-based) perfume" as Landsberger suggested, *apud* J. Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter/Universitätsverlag, 1952) 277.

[35] §9 i 55-60.

[36] KUB 39.71 i 22-32.

[37] The *uliḫi* is mentioned in broken context in the following paragraph of the Pirinkir ritual: KUB 39.78 i 11.

[38] §9 i 60-66.

[39] §§10-11.

from the roof and taken into the temple, thus bringing the Deity of the Night who in her aspect of morning star has been attracted down from the heavens into the water into her old temple. The new temple's founder goes into the presence of the goddess and bows before her. Since it is now daytime, the deity of the night is no longer in the heavens but in the underworld, or perhaps simply elsewhere. So, then the deity's priest and the founder each pull up the deity seven times from the netherworld using a ritual pit,[40] called an *ābi*.[41] The pit is paid for its services by dropping in a shekel of silver. Also involved in the ritual is more red, blue and undyed wool, more fine oil, a white shawl, a few gemstones, five more thin-breads, some thick bread, a small cheese, and another jug of wine.[42] The text does not indicate this, but one presumes that the further stands of wool into which bits of the goddess keep getting pulled are attached to the original tassel of strands (the *uliḫi*) attached to the statue.

There follows another ritual involving red, blue and natural yarn plus oil, and the two types of bread in the deity's storehouse. On the evening of the same day, when it is dark enough for stars to be visible, the new temple's founder enters the old temple, but this time he does not bow to the deity. A blood ritual is performed with the sacrifice of a bird and either a kid or a lamb. Also involved in the ritual are some blue, red and natural yarn, a white shawl, some blankets and plenty of bread and wine, plus cheese, butter, and honey. The ritual pit gets a further gift of a shekel of silver. Then there is a ritual of praise accompanied by the sacrifice of a sheep along with more bread and wine. A shekel of silver and some *gangati*-herb serve to purify the founder and the deity. Last but not least, they make a holocaust of a lamb. Also involved in this ritual are yet more bread and wine, butter and honey as well as barley flour—the last presumably also intended as a burnt offering. Only now does the founder bow to the deity, and then he goes home.[43]

Meanwhile, the servants of the deity, armed with the usual shekel of silver, red, blue and natural yarn, fine oil, bolt of *gazarnul*-fabric, thin bread and wine repeat the ritual of drawing the waters of purification and bring the waters to the old temple. They put this water of purification on the roof where it is to spend the night beneath the

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[40] §12.

[41] Related to Hebrew *'ôb*, and Akkadian *apu*, Sumerian ab.làl.kur.re, etc. See H. Hoffner, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 86 (1967) 385-401 and J. Puhvel, *Hittite Etymological Dictionary* A 99-102 with further bibliography.

[42] §10-11 i 69-73, ii 4-5.

[43] §§10-14.

stars. Their final task is to get ready the ritual paraphernalia for the following day. Part of this is taken up onto the roof for the well-being ritual for the deity Pirinkir, who, as we saw above, is a sundisk of gold weighing a shekel. The rest goes inside the temple for the well-being ritual of the Deity of the Night. The founder gets ready a gift of a silver necklace or a silver star ornament for the deity.

On the fourth day in the evening, when it is dark enough for stars to be visible, the new temple's founder comes into the temple and looks after Pirinkir by offering her ritual of well-being on the roof. Presumably this is intended to get Pirinkir's goodwill for the subsequent actions. The Deity of the Night who in her aspect as the evening star has been attracted down from the heavens into the water in the basin is brought down from the roof to participate in the offering for wellbeing in the temple, and receives a scattering of dough balls and fruit. The two rituals of wellbeing appear to have been quite similar, involving in addition to the usual red, blue and natural yarn, fine oil, bread and wine, various types of herb and bean soup and porridge, oil cakes, dried fruit, beer, and a sheep. The Deity of the Night also gets butter, honey, and a bolt of fabric and the ritual pit gets another shekel of silver. The seventh and last triple strand to be produced is twice the normal size—made from two strands each of wool instead of the usual one each; altogether, we have two triple strands for the morning star, two for the storehouse, and three for the evening star. At the end of the day the new temple's founder pays the deity, the priest, and the *katra*-women, bows and goes out.[44]

The fifth day consists simply of offerings that appear to be a breakfast of bread, herb soup and beer for the deity. The text states that the ritual of the old temple is finished.[45] Since the most important rite of all has yet to occur in the old temple, presumably this means that the ritual preparations in the old temple for this most important rite have been completed, i.e., both aspects of the Deity of the Night have been drawn into her temple and all has been made well.

This most important rite is called the *tuḫalzi*-ritual, a word of unknown meaning. Fine oil is poured into a wood *tallai*-vessel. Then someone, perhaps the new temple's founder,[46] says in front of the Deity: "You are an important deity. Take care of yourself. Divide your divinity. Come to the aforementioned new temples. Take an

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[44] §§17-18.
[45] §19.
[46] The text suddenly changes from plural, which functions as the indefinite in Hittite, to singular verbs, but omits a subject. It could also be the priest of the Deity of the Night who is meant.

important place for yourself."[47] Then they draw the deity out from the wall using red wool seven times. He, the founder(?), takes the *ulihi*, which has been hanging on the deity's cult statue since the second day, and places it into the wood *tallai*-vessel of oil, and the vessel is sealed.[48] The reason for delaying this ritual so long is presumably to ensure that the new temple does not end up with, say, only the morning star, and leave the old temple with only the evening star. Now, with any luck, the new temple's fair share of the divinity is ensconced in the *tallai*-vessel and both temples will end up with all aspects of the divinity.

Meanwhile the new clothing and implements have been carried into the new temple.[49] The *tallai*-vessel containing the *ulihi* is carried to the new temple and put down apart from the cult statue. Since one cannot be sure that the deity indeed has been transported in the *ulihi* in the *tallai*-vessel, another ritual of drawing the deity is performed either on the same day or, if the founder of the temple prefers, on another day. This time the ritual takes place at a riverbank in a rural area. Tents have been pitched in anticipation of the ritual. At the river, using fine oil, a red scarf, twenty thin breads, a jug of wine and some leavened bread and cheese they draw seven paths and coax the deity to return from the old cult centers of Mesopotamia—from Akkad, from Babylon, from Susa, from Elam, from Ḫursagkalamma—or from wherever else she might be—from the mountain, the river, the sea, the valley, the meadow, the sky, the ground.[50] Possibly the riverbank has been chosen because the river could be seen as a road connecting Hatti to the Mesopotamian cities where the goddess is worshipped,[51] and the rural setting is appropriate to the other locations from which the goddess is being lured. A new *ulihi*, consisting of a single strand of red wool in its own *tallai*-vessel is created in the usual way.[52] They carry the new *ulihi* into a tent and place it on a wicker table, that is, on a portable altar. An appetizer of oil, honey, fruit, bread, cake, cheese, barley flour and wine is set out. These are intended to accompany the sacrifices of a kid for the ritual of blood and a lamb for the ritual of praise. A lamb is burned as a holocaust (as presumably is the barley flour). The rest of the meal, consisting of soup and porridge, warmed bread, beer and wine is

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[47] iii 26-28.
[48] §§21-22 iii 23-32.
[49] §20.
[50] §§22-24.
[51] This is merely a supposition. Rivers certainly were seen to connect to the netherworld. See V. Haas, *Religion*, 464f.
[52] iii 39, 51.

served to the deity.[53] Then the new *uliḫi* is carried to the founder's house accompanied by music and a strewing of sour bread, crumbled cheese and fruits. The deity is circled with amber(?),[54] which perhaps created a magic circle intended to keep her always in some way in the house of the new temple's founder. Then they move to the storehouse, presumably of the temple. You will remember that one of the places that a ritual had been performed in the old temple was in the storehouse. They dedicate a lamb for the holocaust ritual, which is accompanied by bread, oil cake, oil, ghee, honey and fruit in addition to the usual barley flour. This time, there is no ritual of blood or ritual of praise. Then they carry the new *uliḫi* to the new temple and attach it to the new cult statue.[55] For the last time, the usual shekel of silver, red, blue and natural yarn, fine oil, bolt of fabric, bread and wine are taken for the drawing of waters of purification. The water is to spend the night on the roof of the new temple, sleeping beneath the stars.[56]

The next morning (presumably at dawn with the stars still standing in the sky) they open the *tallai*-container with the old *uliḫi* inside that they have brought from the old temple. They mix the old oil inside the *tallai*-container with the water which they intend to use to wash the wall of the temple.[57] Although the text does not say so, this wash water is presumably the purification water that has spent the previous night on the roof.[58] So if the deity in her aspect of morning star has been drawn down from the heavens into the water, she is now mixed with whatever essence they had brought from the old temple and which had seeped from the *uliḫi* into the surrounding oil. When the walls are washed with this mixture, they become ritually pure and,[59] remembering that the deity had been drawn from the walls of the old temple, presumably now the deity is being absorbed into the walls of the new temple. The old *uliḫi*, which during the course of the ritual in

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[53] §§25-26 ii 49-62.

[54] *ḫūšti*-stone. Identification by A. M. Polvani, *La terminologia dei Minerali nei testi ittiti*, Eothen 3 (Florence: Elite, 1988) 18-27, followed cautiously by Puhvel, *HED* 3:412f. The verb *arḫa waḫnu-* literally means "to make something rotate". The object is the god, and the amber is in the instrumental. The translation above follows Collins. Puhvel, *HED* 2:412 translates "swing at", presumably since the phrase with the addition of the preverb *šer* "above" (*šer arḫa waḫnu-*) means to wave over, but in this latter phrase the substance waved is in the accusative while that over which it is waved is in the dative-locative.

[55] §§26-27 iii 62-iv 7.

[56] §28.

[57] §30 iv 22-26.

[58] §28.

[59] §30 iv 26-27.

the old temple had been tied to the cult statue, is bound to the red scarf of the new cult statue.[60]

On the evening of the same day, when it is dark enough for stars to be visible, they take two bronze knives which were made at the same time as the cult statue and dig an *ābi* (ritual pit). Then they slaughter a sheep down into it. The divine image, the wall of the temple and all the divine implements are made ritually pure with the blood. The fat, however, is burned—no one is to eat it.[61] So if the deity in her aspect of evening star has been drawn up from the Netherworld into the blood, she has now been introduced to her new temple. This action completes the installation of the new version of the deity in the temple.

"The ritual for settling the Goddess of the Night separately" continues, but its continuation is unfortunately lost. What is missing is at the very least a further set of rituals of well-being, to judge from instructions to collect bread, oil cake, various types of herb and bean soup and porridge, beer, wine, and fruit.[62]

In summary, it can be seen that with the key verb *šarra-* properly understood, the way to have two separate cult centers for the same deity was to have that deity divide his or her divinity and then to have that allomorph of the original physically moved and/or coaxed though a repeating pattern of variations of ritual actions into the new construction. Thus, the goddess in the oracular query was being moved to the city of Zithara in order for the king to divide her there. In the ritual for the Goddess of the Night *ritual* Tudḫaliya II would not have been stealing from his new Kizzuwatnan ally but rather would have been honoring him by wanting a copy of one of the Kizzuwatnan goddesses for one of his cities. Similarly, Prince Ḫattušili was not removing the cult of Šaušga of Šamuḫa from Šamuḫa but was rather creating a duplicate cult for her allomorph in Urikina.

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[60] §31.
[61] §32.
[62] §29

TRANSLATING TRANSFERS IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

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Rituals of transferal, in which an afflicted subject is freed of a problem at the expense of another, are commonly found in both ancient and modern magico-religious traditions. Westermarck's classic study of modern Moroccan ritual and belief[1] provides valuable insights into the way in which the ancient participants in such rituals may have understood what was supposed to be happening when a healing substance was, as it were, infected with an ill by transferal from a patient.

Westermarck's informants spoke of an abstract quality, the *bas*, which was imagined as actually passing out of the patient and into the surrogate in the course of the rite. "The death to which a person is exposed may, as it were, be transferred to an animal by slaughtering it. … So also the accidental death of an animal is supposed to save its owner or his family from misfortune. … All over Morocco it is believed that the accidental breaking of an object … 'takes away the *bas*' from its owner. … It is good to lose a thing, it takes away the *bas*."[2] "One of my informants … expressed the opinion that the *baraka* of the prayer (said by a man not used to praying) does not directly kill the animal (which died as a result of the prayer), but that the sin of the owner, which is removed from him by the prayer goes into the animal and kills it."[3]

Similarly, more mundane and specific ills can be extracted from a patient by appropriate rites. Rather closer to home in Merry Olde England, "In former days persons afflicted with fits used to … sleep all night under the altar-table in the church, holding a live cock in their arms. 'In the morning they would let the cock go, when the bird took off all the fits with him and died soon after.'"[4]

But do these interesting testimonies lead us anywhere, or are we left with an explanation which applies only to modern Mediterranean folklore? Not only did ancient Mesopotamians also speak of evil

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[1] E. Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, 2 vols. (London, 1926).
[2] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 607-608.
[3] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol 1: 227.
[4] G. L. Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 94.

(*lemuttu*) as an abstract quality that could literally be removed from an afflicted person's body, but the verb (*nasāhu*) which they used to describe this process also means "to transfer".[5] Moreover, the techniques which they used to achieve this removal or transfer were not dissimilar to those of Westermarck's informants.

In Mediterranean folklore, transfer can be accomplished in any number of ways. One can transfer the illness to a surrogate by rubbing the patient with it, as one might use a cloth to rub off dirt. It is not necessary to rub the surrogate vigorously over the patient; instead, a simple physical, visual, or verbal contact is adequate to effect transfer. "At Fez a person who has a sty goes to somebody else's house and knocks at the door. When the people inside ask who it is, he answers them, 'It is not I who knocked at your door, the sty knocked at your door, may it fly from me and stick to you'; then he runs away leaving the sty behind, as it were."[6] A similar, unfortunately quite fragmentary, ritual exists from ancient Mesopotamia: "If a man's eyes contain floaters, he goes to the house of a stranger and calls out to the door … 'Take away your floaters!'"[7]

Neither, in Mediterranean folklore, is it necessary to rub or touch something against the patient for the special use of the curing ritual—anything which has been rubbed against or in contact with the patient while he was sick will have picked up bits of the illness and can be used to transfer it to a third party as in this Moroccan spell. "In the same tribe a man who is losing many of his animals by death goes to a shrine, taking with him some dates and the peg to which one of the dead animals used to be tethered. He puts the dates at the head of the grave, asks the saint to remove the cause of the evil, and promises him a sheep or goat if his request is granted. He then leaves the peg on the road, hoping that somebody will pick it up and use it and thereby unwittingly transfer the evil to his own animals."[8]

Particularly effective for such a purpose was the patient's clothing as in this Italian spell: "To undo the *attactura* that has caused nettle rash, the afflicted person wears his clothing inside out for three days. This indicates the expulsion of the malignant power. … The clothing of the fascinated person is then removed and placed at a crossroads, where the first passer-by absorbs the evil in which they were impregnated."[9]

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[5] For references, see *CAD* N/2 7-9.
[6] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 606.
[7] *BAM* 515 i 12-13.
[8] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 173.
[9] W. Appel, "The Myth of the Jettatura" in C. Maloney, ed., *The Evil Eye* (New York, 1976), p. 20.

A Mesopotamian healing ritual makes a similar use of the patient's spit. "He catches a green frog in the water. On the same day that he captured it, in his bed, in the morning before he puts his foot on the ground, you ru[b him] from head to foot and you (sic.) say as follows: 'Frog, you know the 'grain' which seized me, [but I do not know it]. Frog, [you know] the *li'bu* which seized me [but I do not know it]. When you (try to) hop off and return to your waters, you will return [the evil to] its steppe.' You have [the patient] say this three times [and] three times he spits into its mouth. You take it to the steppe and you tie its foot with a band of red and white wool [and you fas]ten it to a *baltu* [or *āšagu*-thorn]."[10]

It is obvious that dirt passes into washwater and, it is assumed, so will evils pass into anything with which a patient washed himself. The washwater can simply be allowed to fall to the ground, or it can be used to effect further transfer of the evil. An ancient Mesopotamian healing ritual instructs: "You rinse (the patient) with well water. You pour (some of) that water out at a crossroads and he says as follows: 'I received (the evil from them, now) let them receive it from me'. He bathes himself in the water."[11] Alternatively, the patient can bathe in a river or spring or the sea, leaving his evils behind him as he leaves the water as in this Moroccan spell. "In Aglu a person who has been bitten by a mad dog finishes the treatment to which he has been subjected by going into the sea and letting seven waves pass over his body".[12]

Indirect contact between a patient and a surrogate can be achieved by passing it by him, the idea being that the possessing demon will find the object waved past irresistable and leave the patient for it as in this Moroccan spell. "An old man from Andjra told me that when a person is troubled with *le-ryah* a fowl is killed and boiled without salt. The sick man does not eat of it, but it is taken, whole as it is, to a place nobody visits … As soon as the fowl is boiled the jnun begin to eat of it, and while eating they are carried away with it; but if anybody walks over it at the place where it is thrown, the jnun will enter into him."[13] An ancient Mesopotamian example of a similar rite is the Neo-Assyrian ritual of the goat. "An oppressive spirit which si[t]s on a person—it seizes his mouth. He will not eat bread; he will not drink water. They tie an adult male goat to the

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[10] *AMT* 53/7 + K 6732:2-9//K 2581:21'-24'. I would like to thank the trustees of the British Museum for permission to quote from this unpublished material.

[11] *BAM* 417: 17-19.

[12] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 90.

[13] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 333.

head of his bed. They cut a staff from the orchard. They make it multicolored with red dyed wool. They fill a cup with water. They cut off a bough from the orchard. They put the staff, the cup of water (and) the bough three times in the (city gate called) 'eternal gate'".[14] (This will hopefully ensure that the cure is also "eternal", thus avoiding the necessity of repeating the ritual.)

"In the morning, they bring the adult male goat, the bough, the staff, and the cup to the steppe. They leave the staff with the cup together somewhere to one side."[15] (These are gifts appropriate to one about to make a journey to the Netherworld.) "They bring the bough (and) the adult male goat to the edge of the road. They slaughter the adult male goat. They leave the fetlocks on the hide (when they skin it). They cut off the head. They cook the meat. They bring [two?] *kappu*-bowls of copper filled with honey (and) oil. They clothe the bough in the hide. They tie the front fetlocks with red wool. [They] dig a [p]it. They pou[r] the [h]oney (and) oil into it. They cut off the forelegs. They pu[t] them into the pit; that is, they put in the bough (and) the forelegs on to[p]. They bur[y] (it) [with di]rt from a cistern."[16] (The spirit, having shared the patient's meal of goat meat, will be greedy and go to find the rest of the animal. When he does, he will find himself a headless wonder, buried in a pit with his feet not only tied together but detached and sitting on top of him.)

"… He (the patient) eats this [m]eat without … his hands … [Th]at person will recover. The spirit which was on him will get up (and go). He will open his mouth. He will eat bread. He will drink water."[17] We need not doubt the efficacy of this rite if, as seems likely, it is a case of "I won't eat till you give me meat". Having consumed an entire goat, the patient's craving should be fully appeased and his "evil spirit" well exorcised. If Moroccan parallels may be trusted, however, the meat will have been served to him unsalted.

Alternatively, the recipient may stay still and the patient have to pass by it, step over it, lie over it, or crawl under it as in this Moroccan spell. "At a few miles' distance from Demnat there is a small rock projecting from the ground in the shape of the back and neck of a camel, with an opening underneath, just large enough for a person to creep through. People who are suffering from some illness and women who are longing for offspring crawl three times through the hole from west to east."[18]

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[14] E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben* (Berlin, 1931), no. 19: 1-9.
[15] TuL no. 19:10-13.
[16] TuL no. 19:14-28.
[17] TuL no. 19:32, 34-36.
[18] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol 1: 69.

It should be noted that the modern concept of "contagion" should not be applied to transfer rites. Ancient Mesopotamians recognized that diseases could be contagious; the expressions they used to describe this, however (*muštahhizu*; *la'ābu*),[19] are not related to the verb used to describe transfers (*nasāḫu*), which implies a complete removal, literally "extraction" of the illness. In contrast to the situation with contagious diseases, the ill did not simply infect the recipient in the course of such rites of transfer but was actually drawn into it, leaving the patient free and clear (and the recipient somewhat damaged) in the process, as in this ancient Mesopotamian NAM.BÚR.BI for the man who regretted too late having had intercourse with a goat.

"You take hair from the she-goat. On the roof, before Šamaš, you tie up a virgin she-goat and you take hair from a she- goat whose hair (and) body are red. You lay (them) out before the virgin she-goat and pour a libation of beer over (them)."[20] (The juxtaposition between your recent conquest and a goat with whom you have *not* slept plus the presence of red and white together indicate a desire for permanent separation. "As a deflowered female will never be a virgin again and as red will never become white or white red, so may I and the evil be parted forever.") "You tie that hair up in a linen cloth. You put it on the ground before Šamaš. (The egerast)[21] kneels on it and says as follows … He says this three times and reports his doings and then prostrates himself."[22] (The evil is now in the goat hair package.) "You throw that linen cloth into the gate of a beer merchant and (after) fifteen days you remove it. The profit of the beer merchant will be diminished but the omen will stand to one side and its evil will not approach the man and his household."[23] (The hapless beer merchant was probably singled out for a dry spell due to the fact that his profits came under the purview of the goddess Ištar,[24] who is otherwise closely associated with both goats and intercourse).

Many of Westermarck's informants described this process of transmission of evils not simply as a transfer but as an exchange of good and bad qualities between patient and recipient. In other words, when the patient was purified or released, what was actually happen-

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[19] For references, see *CAD* MM/II 283b; L 6-7.
[20] S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* (Mainz, 1994) § VIII.17:2-6.
[21] > *aix* (gen. *aigos*) "female goat".
[22] S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* VIII.17:7-8, 22.
[23] S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* VIII.17:23-27.
[24] See, for example, E. Ebeling, *Quellen zur Kenntnis der babylonischen Religion*, MVAG 23/2 (Leipzig, 1918): 40-46.

ing was that the recipient was being obligated to give the patient purity or release or other benefits in return for the sickness which the patient had transferred to him. "I left in you the laziness and may you give me health," says the weary traveller as he leans his back against a stone.[25]

In accidental or sorcerous transfers, this equation is reversed; that is, the victim loses his good health or luck (*baraka*) to the sorcerer's charm and receives either the sorcery or some other undesirable quality in return. "'O my aunt the *hamma*, I left to you health and may you give me rest,' meaning that he left there his illness and got health instead; my informant made the remark that when a jenn has entered a person's body it takes away his health and gives him its own health in return."[26]

This understanding is often reflected in the legomena which accompanied rites of transfer in Morocco (typically phrased as "offerings" to the recipient). "Here, take the (yellow) tooth of a donkey and give me the (white) tooth of a gazelle," says the boy as he throws his baby tooth towards the sun.[27] "In other tribes the people offer the new moon 'dry things', and ask it to give them 'green things' in return."[28] "I gave you this hair of mine, O moon give me yours," says the girl whose hair is falling out.[29] "Oh my uncle the Sea, I am troubled with spirits, give me children and health," says the barren woman as she washes herself in the sea.[30]

Similarly, in Spain: "On Saint John's Day, at dawn, an *encanta* of gold comes out to comb her hair. She has a golden comb and a brush. What's needed is a brave and valiant man; it can't be a woman. He has to carry a basket with some old rags, a part of a jacket, pants, underpants, all in the basket. And he gets there and says—he has to use the *tu* form—'Take from my poverty and give me from your wealth' … And when he gets home, he looks into the basket and finds it full of gold."[31]

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[25] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 606.

[26] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 335; cf. "'Oh my aunt the *hamma*, I left to you copper, and may you give me silver'; meaning that he left there his illness and will get back his health" (Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 335).

[27] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 120; cf. "Take O sun the yellow, give me alum" (Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol 1: 120).

[28] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 124.

[29] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 126.

[30] Westermarck, *Morocco*, vol. 1: 327.

[31] M. Cátedra, *This World Other Worlds* (Chicago, 1988), p. 49.

A recently discovered "magical" rite from ancient Uruk provides new examples of the types of transfer rites we have been discussing[32] and suggests that Westermarck's Moroccan informants were by no means alone in understanding the transfer of evil from patient to recipient or from sorcerer to patient as involving an exchange of good and bad qualities between them. This interesting text consists of a collection of three rituals for a woman who is able to get pregnant, but who is plagued by frequent miscarriages.[33]

The first ritual begins with the production of two amulets. "At the setting of the sun, you isolate (her). You do her shaving onto a piece of leather and you put (it) around her neck in a new leather bag. You thread copper beads, lapis, masculine lone-stone, magnetic hematite, and …-stone on red (wool). You wind three burls of red-dyed wool. You put (it) on her right hand."[34]

The second of these amulets is perfectly conventional. The magnetic hematite may have been designed to keep the child in the womb[35] (in which case the amulet would have been removed at the birth itself). Other ingredients, viz the "masculine" lone-stone and the choice of the right hand (which is used to release masculine birds in apotropaic rituals)[36] may indicate that the woman's problem in this case was specifically the failure to bring male children to term.

The first amulet suggests something rather more interesting. The hair which is shaved off might be presumed to contain the patient's problem. If so, anything which came into contact with it would be a potential recipient of the evil. Why then, are the shavings used as an amulet and not simply disposed in some appropriate manner?

A hint is given in an unplaced prayer attached to this ritual which was probably meant to be performed at this point.[37] It goes as follows. "Šamaš, you are the one who entirely lights the four quarters. You are the lord of (those) above and below. You decide the case of

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[32] E. von Weiher, *Uruk: Spätbabylonische Texte aus dem Planquadrant U 18 Teil 5* (=SpTU 5), Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warka Endberichte 13 (Mainz, 1998) no. 248. I wish to thank Prof. Von Weiher for making the cuneiform copy of the text available to me in advance of the publication.

[33] SpTU 5 no. 248: 1, r. 12, 25.

[34] Ibid. 1-5.

[35] See J. A. Scurlock, "Baby-Snatching Demons, Restless Souls and the Dangers of Childbirth: Medico-Magical Means of Dealing with Some of the Perils of Motherhood in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Incognita* 2 (1991): 140.

[36] S. M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung* VIII.1.2: 63-66, 81-82.

[37] It is addressed to the Sun god who is a witness to this part of the ritual, performed at sundown, but not to the rest of the ritual, which was to be performed at night.

caster and castress (of spells); you pronounce the decision of sorcerer and sorceress; you bring to an end the punishment of the wronged man and woman. She seeks you out, the woman who does not bring (her children) to term[38] on whom punishment was imposed, whom caster and castess (of spells) detain, whom the greeting of sorcerer [and sorceress] make bear a load, who gives birth to infants and then … who does not raise her infant and does not widen her relations … who does not look upon her relations, who is taken away and … above. Šamaš, you are the one who entirely [lig]hts the four quarter[s]; make the woman's judgement (and) of the sorcerer [and sorceress pronounce their decision …]."[39]

It would appear that sorcery is the presumed cause of the woman's problem. If so, then the sorcerer or sorceress will have performed some ritual to dispatch their sorcery against her. On one level, then, the hairy amulet is simply prophylactic. When the sorcery tries to reach her, it will instead be attracted harmlessly into the bag round her neck. But there is more to it than that. As the recitation informs us, the judgement of the god Šamaš was not intended merely to result in the cure of the woman, but in the punishment of her persecutors. As other antiwitchcraft recitations make clear, what was envisaged was a situation in which the very ailment inflicted by the sorcerer on the patient was visited upon him or her or, in other words, his sorcery was "turned over" upon him.[40] In practical terms, the sun god was expected to reverse the spell, sending back the sorcery, now loaded with the patient's inability to bring children to term which it had contacted in the patient's hair, to reinflict this problem on the sorcerer who had dispatched it. It is doubtless not irrelevant in this context that the Akkadian word for "hair" (*šārtu*) is not dissimilar to one of the words for "sin" and "punishment" (*šērtu*).

As is usual with transfer rites, however, the woman's cure is far from finished. Just as when one washes very dirty hands with soap, one washing is not sufficient, and even so, you often end up with some dirt on the towel, so it is rare for a problem of any magnitude to be completly gotten rid of in a single, unrepeated, act of transfer.

"And you give her bread,[41] the short (bone) of a male sheep with its meat (still on it), (and) 2 *qû*-measures of seed grain besides. It spends the night at her head. In the morning, before the sun comes

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[38] Reading *ub-be-ak-ka la mu-šal-in*[*-tum*].
[39] SpTU 5 no. 248: 41- r. 2.
[40] For references, see *CAD* N/1 17b s.v. *nabalkutu* mng. 3.
[41] Reading NINDA instead of *šá*. The reading would seem to be supported by the fact that bread is left with the meat and the seed grain at the crossroads in line 8.

up, you suspend it from a wall. She goes and you place the bread, meat, and seed grain in a secluded place, at a crossroads, and she says five times: 'The ones with names have given (them) to me; the ones without names have received (them) from me.' When she has said (this), she takes off her garments and you bathe her with water. She gets up (out of the water) and dresses in another garment. And she does not look down (*lētu nadû*) behind her."[42]

When the offerings are left at the crossroads, the woman's problem is meant to be left with them, as is signalled by the washing and change of garments with the specific prohibition on looking back (violation of which would result in the return of the problem). That the offerings are meant to symbolize the foetus is made clear by the inclusion of the seed grain and the instruction to suspend them from a wall (as the foetus is suspended in the womb of a standing mother). The specific choice of surrogate may be dictated by the fact that the shin bone is characterized as being "short" (in size). The cut from a male animal is thus a good surrogate for a stillborn boy which is also flesh and bone, incomplete, and characterized by a term in the womb which is "short" (in time). Having this foetus surrogate spend the night by the head of the patient serves to attract out the quality of difficult births from the real foetus to the surrogate for transfer to the inhabitants of the crossroads, namely ghosts (to whom bread, grain and bits of meaty bone would otherwise be appropriate offerings).[43] As is known from other references to ghosts, "ones with names" are family ghosts lucky enough to have a continuing cult, whereas the "ones without names" are the forgotten ghosts with nobody to care for them.[44] In Akkadian, however, "name" is one way of describing children.[45] This allows for a rather nice set of puns embedded within a ritual exchange of qualities that would be quite at home in Westermarck's Morocco. The family ghosts (who have names) are to give their names (i.e., live boys) to the patient and the forgotten ghosts (who have no names) are to take the patient's no names (the stillborn children symbolized by the offerings) in return.

Next Ea, god of sweet waters and healing rites is involved in the proceedings. "She goes to the river and she goes down to the river. She draws water three times in a downstream direction and you

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[42] SpTU 5 no. 248: 5-11.

[43] See next note.

[44] See J. A. Scurlock, "Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Mesopotamian Thought" in J. M. Sasson, ed., *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (New York, 1995), vol. 3: 1889.

[45] For references, see *CAD* Š/III 295-296 s.v. *šūmu* mng. 4.

recite (this) recitation over it. 'You flow in a straight line (and) your waters make (things) flow in a straight line. Receive (evil) from me and take the sin (etc.) from my body downstream with your water. May the rivers fill up (with it). May the marshes add good things. May they make the bond of my evil depart. River, you flow in a straight line (and) your waters make (things) flow in a straight line (*'šr*); cause me to give birth easily (*'šr*) so that I may sing your praises. The spell is not mine; it is the recitation of Ea and Asalluhi. It is the recitation of Damu and Gula, the recitation of Ningirim, the mistress of recitations.' You say (this) three times." [46]

The assertion at the end that the spell is a gift of the gods helps to guarantee the compliance of the river (who might be supposed to be unimpressed by a mere mortal's pleas). The suitablity of the river is ensured not merely by the presence of water for purification but also by the fact that the word in Akkadian which is used to describe movement in a straight line (as in the river's flow) is the same as that used of giving birth easily (as in the baby coming straight out of the womb), not to mention the obvious fact that the baby itself is accompanied by an outflow of fluid. Washing three times in a downstream direction while reciting the recitation transfers to the river the woman's inability to give birth and in such a way that it will end up flowing straight to the marshes without accidentally reinfecting her. What interests us here in particular is that, once again, the transfer is actually described as an exchange whereby the river and its marshes "receive" the sin or whatever has caused the problem and in return the waters add "good things" to the patient and cause her to give birth easily.

Ea is also directly addressed in a recitation whose placement is uncertain. "[Ea], you are the one who created everything. You are the … She seeks you out, the woman [who does not bring (her children) to term] on whom punishment was imposed. To the *apsû*[47] before you … Make the woman's judgement (and) cancel her sin (etc.). May the rivers carry (it) off. May the marshes add good things. May they make the bond of her evil depart. Make the woman escape the punishments which the caster and castress, the sorcerer and sorceress imposed; cancel (them). May she raise the infants among her male children. May she widen her relations. May she sing your praises."[48]

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[46] SpTU 5 no. 248: 12-19.
[47] Ea's home and the repository of sweet water.
[48] SpTU 5 no. 248 r. 3-11.

To make the washings more effective and to ensure that the evil ends up reinflicted on the sorcerer or sorceress who sent it, the patient is instructed to soap up. "You give her soap-plant and you say (this) recitation over it. 'Soap-plant, soap-plant, Sîn conceived you; Šamaš made you grow; Addâ gave you water to drink from the clouds. … What the sorcerer did, I have washed off. What the sorceress did, I have washed off. What the caster (of spells) did, I have washed off. What the castress (of spells) did, I have washed off. What the person who has (sorcery) done, I have washed off. The sorcerer and sorceress, caster and castress … may it (stay) with (you); may it be imposed on you.'"[49]

The river's role in the transfer rites is now complete. "She comes up from the river. She goes to a potter's oven and takes shelter in the oven and she says as follows. 'Pure oven, eldest daughter of Anu, from whose womb fire is withdrawn; hypogastric region inside which the heroic fire god makes his home. You are in good condition and your implements are in good condition. … You become full and then you become empty. But I am pregnant and then I do not bring to term what is in my womb. Please give me your things which are well formed. Take away the things which are not well formed. … implements do not come out of your womb. May what is in my womb be in good health. May I see its … Where I live may it be pleasing.'"[50]

The choice of a potter's oven is dictated by the patient's problem; it is in some sense also a womb from which foetuses (pots) regularly emerge, sometimes "whole" (also "well" in Akkadian) and sometimes cracked or broken. In this case, the entry of the woman into the oven is meant to transfer her problem to it—producing healthy children and a really badly broken batch of pots. We may presume that the potter was paid for his oven (to compensate him for the hoped-for loss of crockery). Again, the transfer is explicitly described as an exchange. "Please give me your things which are well formed. Take away the things which are not well formed."

Finally, the woman addresses her problem to a date palm whose proverbial fertility and tendency to sway in the wind is exploited to the patients' advantage. "She goes down to a garden and takes shelter (under) a date palm and (says): 'Date palm, who receives every wind, receive from me sin (etc.) and where I live, (receive from me having to say) wah!, not sleeping, *di'u*, restlessness, (and) loss of infants, slaves and slave girls as many as there may be so that I may not die in my

[49] Ibid. 19-25.
[50] Ibid. 26-32.

steppe. They inalterably keep coming back; it (the misfortune) is close by, downstream[51] (and) in front. Where there is an early harvest, you cause there to be a late harvest. Where there is a late harvest, you cause there to be an early harvest. You cause the [broke]n tree to have flies (to pollinate it). You cause the tree which does not bear (fruit) to have fruit. Unhappiness (and) ill health and whatever insignificant little thing of my god and goddess I saw and stepped upon without realizing it; I don't know (what)—receive, receive it from me so that I may sing your praises.'"[52] This is probably the most expensive part of the rite, since we may presume that nobody is going to want to harvest the dates from this particular tree ever again.

The second ritual provides the clearest and most explicit parallel to the Westermarck material. "You set out a censer (burning) juniper before Gula (goddess of healing). You pour out a libation of *miḫḫu*-beer and she (the patient) says as follows. 'Ninkarrak, [ex]halted mistress, your merciful mother, may the pregnant ewe of Šakkan and Dumuzi[53] receive my pregnancy from me and give me her pregnancy. May she receive from me (my) inability to give birth right away and give me her ability to give birth right away.' She says (this) three times and then in the morning before Šamaš you ignite a brush pile on top of bricks. You scatter juniper."[54] The offerings to Gula are designed to enlist her aid and to ensure the compliance of the ewe.

"One should secure(?)[55] a pregnant ewe which brings (its young) to term to an uprooted (pole) and two …-s carry it and the pregnant woman says as follows into the ears of the pregnant ewe." (As the third ritual makes clearer, she is supposed to crawl under the suspended ewe). 'Pregnant ewe of Šakkan and Dumuzi, take my pregnancy away and bring me your equivalent. Take away (my) inability to give birth right away and give me your ability to give birth right away.' She recites (this) three times each into both ears and, when she recites (it) she comes out from below the ewe. And when she comes out the seventh time, facing the [steppe] she spits into the ewe's mouth and she goes out to the steppe and leaves it (there)."[56]

Between the recitation into the ears and the spitting into the mouth and crawling seven times beneath the suspended ewe, the

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[51] Reading *qid-da-at*.
[52] SpTU 5 no. 248: 33-40.
[53] Gods of domestic animals.
[54] SpTU 5 no. 248 r. 12-19.
[55] Reading *lis-kil*. Reading and interpretation are uncertain.
[56] SpTU 5 no. 248 r. 19-24.

problem should be quite thoroughly transferred to the animal which will henceforth be unable to bear live young and which is therefore left in the steppe for wild animals (whose ability to bear live young is hardly desired) to eat. As with the material collected by Westermarck, the motif of exchange of good and evil qualities is made quite explicit in the accompanying legomena. "Take away (my) inability to give birth right away and give me your ability to give birth right away."

The third ritual sees a return to sorcery and crossroads. "She places two breads each at a crossroads and she takes off her garment in the midst of the crossroads and puts it back on again[57] and says this spoken prayer. 'They brought (the evil) and I received (it); I brought it (back) so let them receive (it) from me.' She says this recitation three times and three times she puts out bread. She does not look down (*lētu nadû*) behind her."[58]

The removal of garments at the crossroads serves to transfer the evil to that location, as is made clear in the prohibition on looking behind (which would result in a retransfer of the problem). The recitation ties in nicely to this use of garments to make a transfer, since the verb used to describe bringing the problem to the crossroads (*nš*) is the same as is conventionally used to describe wearing a garment. Thus, going to a crossroads "wearing" (a garment) is linguistically equivalent to going there "bringing" (a problem). In this ritual as in the first one, sorcery is the suspected cause of the problem which is why two breads (one for a potential sorcerer and one for a potential sorceress) are deposited at the crossroads. As usual, the idea of the ritual is to reinflict the evil on the sorcerer who is imagined as having left something at the crossroads for the victim to pass by and pick up. The victim responds by leaving it again at the crossroads, thus completing the exchange: "They brought (the evil) and I received (it); I brought it (back) so let them receive (it) from me."

The ritual continues with a feotus surrogate which, as in the first ritual, is to be left at the crossroads. "You kill a female mouse and you have it grasp[59] a cedar … in its hands. You fasten *ballukku* to its head and you swaddle (it) with carded wool. You put (it) at a crossroads. She says this spoken prayer. 'They brought (the evil) and I received (it); I brought it (back) so let them receive (it) from me.' She does not take (to get home) the road she took (to get there). You repeatedly do this and this at dawn. You put (the bread and mouse) at a crossroads

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[57] Reading TÚG *i-šah-hat u* GAR.GAR-*ma*
[58] SpTU 5 no. 248 r. 26-29.
[59] Reading DIB-*si*.

and she says this spoken prayer. 'They brought (the evil) and I received (it); I brought it (back) so let them receive (it) from me.' She says (this) and does not take (to get home) the road she took (to get there).[60]

The choice of a female animal swaddled like a baby would seem to indicate that, in contrast to the first ritual, where a boy is imagined as the victim of the putative sorcery, and the second ritual which seems to be designed for a child of either sex, this ritual was meant to deal with the specific problem of girls not coming to term. Taking a different road home serves the same purpose as not looking back: to ensure that the problem gets left with the offerings. As is usual, the rite is repeated, although the number of times it is repeated seems to be left to the patient's discretion.

The ewe of the second ritual is here replaced by a she- ass. "You station a pregnant she-ass and the woman holds barley in the cup of her hand and crawls under the pregnant she-ass and she feeds the she-ass three times and says this spoken prayer to the she-ass. 'May what is within you die (and) what is within me live.' She crawls three times under the she-ass and three times she raises up barley to the she-ass."[61]

Crawling under the animal accomplishes the transfer of the problem to the animal. The reason that the patient uses the cup of her hand for feeding is probably that there is a visual pun between the word for "cup of the hand" *up-nu* and the word *ár-nu* ("sin") which is written with the same cuneiform signs. By offering the she-ass the cup of her hand, she is thus also offering her "sin" which has resulted in her inability to give birth, an offering which the animal accepts by eating the proffered barley.

One final rite completes the proceedings. "At noon(?),[62] you put *Šigūšu*-grain at the crossroads and then you hang (it) from a window and then the pregnant woman rubs womb(?) and breast (with it). On the day of her labor pains, a girl grinds (it) and they make it into a dough with the water of her labor pains and you make a figurine of a man and you make a figurine of a woman. You go in until midnight. At midnight, you throw (it) into the street or they throw it into a road. She … and enters her house."[63]

Hanging the grain from the window serves the same purpose as hanging from the wall in the first ritual. Rubbing it against the

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[60] SpTU 5 no. 248 r. 30-34.
[61] Ibid r. 35-37.
[62] Reading U_4.SA_9.
[63] SpTU 5 no. 248 r. 38-41.

woman transfers her problem to it. It is presumably ground by a girl because it is a female foetus which is in danger of being stillborn. Mixing in the amniotic fluid completes the transfer of evil influences to the grain. The little figurine of the man and the woman who are thrown into the street at midnight represent the sorcerer and sorceress upon whom the ills are being reinflicted.

In sum, not only is the congruence between the methods of transfer employed in ancient Mesopotamia and early 20th century Morocco striking, but the legomena of "magical" rites in both areas confirm a similarity in the basic conceptualization of what was supposed to be happening during the transfer. Either a concrete, named, ill or an abstract quality (*bas* for Moroccans; *lemuttu* for Mesopotamians) was imagined as actually passing out of the patient and into the surrogate in the course of the rite. The modern concept of "contagion" should not be applied to such transfer rites. Ancient Mesopotamians recognized that diseases could be contagious; the expressions which they used to describe it, however, are not related to the verb used to describe transfers, which implies a complete removal, literally "extraction" of the illness. In contrast to the situation with contagious diseases, the ill did not simply infect the recipient but was actually drawn into it, leaving the patient free and clear (and the recipient somewhat damaged) in the process. Thus, another way of looking at it was as an exchange of good and bad qualities between patient and recipient, an exhange which is not infrequently explictly mentioned in the legomena of transfer rites in both Morocco and ancient Mesopotamia.

NECROMANCY, FERTILITY AND THE DARK EARTH: THE USE OF RITUAL PITS IN HITTITE CULT

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Hittite *dankuiš daganzipaš*, the "dark earth," refers to the realm of the chthonic deities, the "land beneath the Earth."[1] Thus, it may reasonably be translated "Dark Underworld," or simply "Underworld." Ruling this realm was the Sun Goddess of the Earth, identified in later periods with Mesopotamian Ereškigal and Hurrian Allani (Haas 1994, 132). She is a solar deity by virtue of representing the sun's cycle at night, after it dips below the horizon in the evening and before it rises again in the morning. Thus, rituals performed in order to communicate with her tend to occur at night, in the early morning, or the late evening.

The Sun Goddess of the Earth is also the psychopomp who transports the souls of the deceased to their new abode in the Underworld. A mythological text composed in the period of the Old Kingdom describes the voyage of the human soul to this place: "The soul is great. The soul is great. Whose soul is great? The mortal soul is great. And what road does it travel? It travels the Great Road. It travels the Invisible Road. … A holy thing is the soul of the Sun Goddess, the soul of the Mother" (after Hoffner 1998, 34). A Hittite Death Ritual describes how the "Mother," i.e., the Sun Goddess of the Earth,[2] comes for the soul of the deceased:

> A *patili*-priest who stands on the roof of a building calls down to the house. Who(ever) the deceased (is), he keeps calling his name to those gods among whom he (the deceased) finds himself, (saying) "Where has [he] gone?" The gods answer (from) below and above, "he has gone into the *šinapši*-building." … He (the *patili*-priest) calls down from the roof six times. Six times [he] calls upward. The seventh time when he calls down "where has he gone?," they answer him from above and below, "the Mother [came(?)] to him [and] took him by the hand and led him away."[3]

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[1] Oettinger has argued that this phrase is not in fact original to Hittite, nor indeed to Greek, where it also appears, but is a loan translation from Hurrian (1989/1990, 83-98).

[2] For this identification see Otten in Bittel (1958, 84), Beckman (1983, 236).

[3] KUB 30.28 rev. 1-12 is edited by Otten (1958, 96-97), and Beckman (1983, 236), whose translation is provided here.

Also dwelling in the Underworld were the Primordial Deities (Archi 1990, 114–29), called either by the Hittite *karuileš šiuneš*, or by the Akkadian Anunnaki. They are eight in number and with the Sun Goddess of the Earth, the total number of chthonic gods comes to nine. Their names vary, but in the Ritual to the Underworld Deities for Purifying a House (2), they are named as follows: Aduntarri the diviner, Zulki the dream interpretess, Irpitiga Lord of the Earth,[4] Narā, Namšarā, Minki, Amunki, and Āpi. Their connection with magic is apparent in the titles they bear. Elsewhere, for example, the Ritual of Drawing Paths (1), the inhabitants of the Underworld appear to be the goddesses of birth and fate (DINGIR.MAḪ.MEŠ and the Gulšeš). Still elsewhere (4) the companions to the Sun Goddess of the Earth are referred to as the "Male Deities." In all cases cited below, however, their total number, when determinable, is nine.[5]

There was no established cult for these deities. Instead, rituals directed toward them were reactive, that is, carried out in response to a specific problem. Their rituals were performed out of doors and communication achieved by means of pits dug into the ground. A number of words are used in the texts to refer to these pits: *Ḫatteššar* and *patteššar* are Hittite, in fact the same word except for the interchange of the initial consonant. Hitt. *wappu-* is used specifically of clay pits dug along the river banks. The other frequently attested term is *āpi-*, for which Hoffner attempted to demonstrate a connection with Hebrew *ʾôḇ* (1967, 385–401). The Sumerogram ARÀḪ "storage pit" also appears.

Semantically, these terms are for the most part interchangeable (with the possible exception of ARÀḪ), however close examination confirms what Hoffner suspected based on the absence of cognates in Hittite, that *āpi* is a Hurrian *terminus technicus* and appears only in rituals that can be shown to have absorbed many Hurrian elements. The inclusion of the Pit (^{d}Āpi) among the gods of Underworld (as in [2]) is not so much a testimony to its divine status in the proper sense as it is a recognition of its extra-human power to connect the realm of the gods with that of man. How we understand Hitt. ^{d}Āpi affects the interpretation of the necromantic episodes in Isa 8:19–23 and 1Sam 28:3–25. Hoffner's consideration of the Hittite term in connection with Hebrew *ʾôḇ* has been criticized on linguistic grounds (see

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[4] Or "Lord of Justice"; for this understanding see Otten (1961, 146), and Archi (1990, 118 n. 14).

[5] But see Archi (1990, 120) who refers to the canonical list of twelve found in most Hittite treaties.

Schmidt 1994, 151–54 for arguments). Moreover, Schmidt interprets the Hebrew term as referring to the deceased who returns rather than the pit by which he returns, further weakening the equation. However, while Schmidt correctly points out that there are no examples of necromancy *per se* in Hittite texts (1994, 208 n. 331), not even mythological references to such (cf. Enkidu in Mesopotamian literature), the calling-up of the chthonic deities for the purposes of purification and of offering was practiced in Anatolia as an acceptable, if not altogether common, form of magic. The dead who dwell beneath the earth are never actively solicited in surviving documents, but the Underworld deities are.

The vision of the Underworld and of the Sun Goddess of the Earth's role within it were a part of Hittite ideology at least as early as the period of the Old Kingdom (1650 BC). However, the nine chthonic gods (Archi 1990) and even the term "dark earth" (Oettinger 1989/90) may be Hurrian influences. Indeed, the majority of the rituals that use pits stem from the Hurrian milieu. However, a few rituals using pits seem to be free of Hurrian influence either because they are too early or because geographically they fall outside the range of direct Hurrian influence (see [12], [13] and [14] below). Thus, it cannot be claimed that the use of pits in Hittite ritual is entirely of Hurrian derivation.

Pits served a number of functions in Hittite ritual: as a channel for the chthonic deities, both to ease their passage between worlds and as a door through which to receive offerings ([1]–[6]); in combination with a pig as a way of ensuring the fertility of the earth and of humans ([7]–[9]); as a means of disposing of impurities by consigning them to the earth as an offering, the impurities either having been absorbed into the body of a piglet ([10], [11], [13]), or not (12).

In texts (1), (2), and (3) the purpose of the pits is the same (to attract the Underworld deities), although the reason for pulling them up from the earth varies. In (1), the reason is not explained although we may surmise it is to solicit their favor for some endeavor; in (2) the deities are being sought out as instigators of a house's impurity and are being asked to cleanse it; in (3) the deity is being attracted to her new home. In all three, the image of the deity is present as the pit is dug before it.

1 Ritual of Drawing Paths (for DINGIR.MAḪ and the Fate-Deities):[6]

When they furnish (it) with nine paths, they pick up the tables and take them to the place of the pit (*ābi*). This is the way in which we determined the matter of the pit by oracular inquiry of the gods: They open up seven pits. (Result:) Unfavorable. Then they open up eight pits. (Result:) Favorable. Then they open up nine pits. When they bring them (images) to the place of the pit, they put the gods down and open up the nine pits. Promptly he takes a hoe and digs (with it). Then he takes a pectoral ornament and digs with it. Then he takes a *šatta-*, a spade, and a *ḫuppara-*container, and he clears out (the pit with them). Then he pours wine and oil in(to the pits). He breaks up thin loaves and puts them around (the mouths of the pits) on this side and that side. Next he puts down into the first pit a silver ladder and a silver pectoral ornament. On the pectoral he places a silver ear and hands them down into the first pit. To the last of the ears a scarf is bound. When he finishes, he offers one bird to all for *enumašši* and *itkalzi*. He smears the nine pits with blood. Then for the nine pits (there are) nine birds and one lamb. For *ambašši* and *keldi* he offers nine birds and one lamb. He puts one bird in each pit, but the lamb they cut up and put at the first pit.

2 Ritual to the Underworld Deities for Purifying a House:[7]

§11 He goes to the river bank and takes oil, beer, wine, *walḫi*-drink, *marnuan*-drink, a cupful (of) each in turn, sweet oil cake, meal, (and) porridge. He holds a lamb and he slaughters it down into a pit (*patteššar*). He speaks as follows:

§12 "I, a human being, have now come! As Ḫannaḫanna takes children from the river bank and I, a human being, have come to summon the Primordial Deities of the river bank, let the Sun Goddess of the Earth open the Gate and let the Primordial Deities and the Sun God of the Earth (var. Lord of the Earth) up from the Earth.

§13 Aduntarri the Diviner, Zulki the Dream Interpretess, Irpitiga Lord of the Earth, Narā, Namšarā, Minki, Amunki, Āpi—let them up! …

§18 He sprinkles the clay of the river bank with oil and honey. (With it) he fashions [the]se gods: Aduntarri the Exorcist, Zulki the Dream Interpretess, Irpitiga, Narā, Namšara, Minki, Amunki, Āpi. He fashions them as (i.e., in the form of) daggers. Then he spreads them along the ground and settles these gods there. …

§31 Before the Anunnaki-deities he opens up a Pit (^{d}Āpi) with a dagger and into the Pit he libates oil, honey, wine, *walḫi*-drink, and *marnuwan*-drink. He also throws in one shekel of silver. Then he takes a hand towel and covers over the Pit. He recites as follows: "O Pit, take the throne of purification and examine the paraphernalia of purification.

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[6] KUB 15.31 ii 6-26 is edited by Haas and Wilhelm (1974, 143-81), and Hoffner (1967, 390).

[7] KUB 7.41 and its duplicates are edited by Otten (1961, 114-57) and translated by Collins in Hallo (1997, 168-71).

3 Ritual for Establishing a New Temple for the Goddess of the Night:[8]

When at night on the second day (of the ritual) a star comes out (lit. leaps), the officiant comes to the temple and bows to the deity. They take the two daggers that were made along with the (statue of) the new deity and (with them) dig a pit (*āpi*) for the deity in front of the table. They offer one sheep to the deity for *enumaššiya* and slit its throat downward into the pit (*ḫatteššar*). However, there is no [pulling] from the wall. The table (that) had been built they remove(?). They bloody the golden (image of the) deity, the wall and all the implements of the new [dei]ty. Then the [ne]w deity and the temple are pure. But the fat is burned up. No one eats it.

The pits in each of these three ritual segments allows for passage of the Underworld deity(ies) up from the earth to its image. In both (2) and (3), daggers (GÍR) are used to dig the pits. It is doubtless no coincidence that the exorcist in (2) then molds images of the Underworld gods from the clay of the riverbank in the form of daggers (also GÍR). One is immediately reminded of the dagger-god, interpreted as an Underworld figure, carved on the rock face of Chamber B at the Hittite rock sanctuary, Yazılıkaya, which is the proposed mausoleum of Great King Tudḫaliya IV. Of interest in this context as well are two miniature votive axes found in a clay-lined stone pit excavated near the South Building of that part of Boghazköy (the Hittite capital) called Nişantepe, during the 1991 excavations (Neve 1992, 317–19). Identified as a cultic installation (by Bayburtluoğlu), this large pit, however, is unlikely to be the sort of pit described in the present texts since it is a permanent stone-lined feature plastered in clay and lying within an architectural structure inside the town.

Among the items placed in the pits are, in (1), a silver ladder, pectoral ornament, and ears (see note 12); in (2) one shekel of silver[9] ; in (3) nothing. Libations of wine and oil were poured in the pits in the case of both (1) and (2) and in addition honey, *walḫi-* and *marnuwan* drinks in text (2). The last act in each case, is the blood sacrifice. According to (2, §34); (not included here), when the Storm God drove the Anunnaki into the Underworld, he established for them birds as offerings, and this is indeed what they consistently receive. However, in every case a lamb supplements the birds, perhaps to ensure the favor of the deities. Note that in (1), where nine pits are in use, only the first—for the Sun Goddess?—receives

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[8] KUB 29.4+ and its duplicates are translated by Collins in Hallo (1997, 173-77), with bibliography.

[9] Hoffner (1967, 395) speculated that the use of silver objects might have a significance similar to that of silver bullets for werewolves in modern folklore.

the precious silver objects and the lamb.

Somewhat different in function are a small number of rituals that have been grouped according to their colophons under the rubric, Rituals of "Taking Off/From the Earth" (Taracha 1985, 278–82). The purpose of such rituals was to release a suppliant, royal or otherwise, by means of substitution, "from the influence of the chthonic powers and thus - to absolve him from his sin and to heal him" (Taracha 1990, 177). It does not include, although this has been suggested, the literal removel or lifting of the suppliant from the earth. These rituals might begin, as in (4), with the incipit: "Thus says Tunawiya, Old Woman of Ḫattuša: When I take the king and queen off/from the earth, then I take these things …".[10] The procedure that follows is thus:

4 Tunnawiya of Hattuša's Ritual of "Taking Off the Earth."[11] At the same time as they prepare (all) these (things) in front of the old woman, at daybreak, they dig out two storage pits (ARÀḪ) (into the earth); they dig one storage pit of the Sun Goddess of the Earth and another storage pit of the Male Deities. While they begin digging out the storage pits they drive up a sheep. The old woman consecrates it to the Sun Goddess of the Earth. They slit its throat downward into the storage pit and let its blood flow downward.

And then they drive up a billy-goat. The old woman consecrates it to the Sun Goddess of the Earth and to the Male Deities. They slit its throat downward into the (second) storage pit, releasing the blood downward.

Then they butcher (the animals) with respect to the heads and feet. While the fat cooks, soldiers dig out a storage pit. When they finish digging it, then they [di]g close by another storage pit. It happens that they join it to the (first) pit. The fat cooks and the entire assembly eats it. Before then [they buil]d two pavilions, one (of which is) of His Majesty; the [pavi]lions for the ceremonial dress of the King. Beside, they build then two pavilions of reed wherein the King and the Queen perform ceremonial washing.

Afterwards within the storage pit of the Sun Goddess of the Earth they dig a clay pit (*wappu-*) a little downwards. They make it (as) a small bedroom and then they put the model[s] of beds to the inside. They spread nine screens, nine small blue bedcloths and they make them (i.e., the beds). Within the storage pit the small bedroom of the Sun Goddess of the Earth has already been dug out. They come to (the place) where they seat the Sun Goddess of the Earth. And the pit that they dig out downwards, this is joined to the other pit and the road is made. Thereon they stretch out a long band of red cloth and a long band of blue cloth, on the ro[ad they s]tretch out a band of the ŠÀ.GA.DU_4-cloth."

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[10] KBo 21.1 i 1-2; see note 11 for bibliography.

[11] KUB 55.45 + Bo 69/142 ii 1-23 w. dupl. Bo 3916 + KUB 12.20 : 11-18, edited by Taracha (1990, 172-75).

In the best preserved examples of the *taknaz da-* rituals, the gods of the Underworld are referred to as the Male Deities. In (4) a sheep and goat are killed and the blood is allowed to flow down into the pit. The animals, less their heads and feet, are roasted and eaten by the human participants. The Underworld deities must be satisfied with the blood alone—no bread or libations are added to supplement their meal. Two pits (ARÀḪ) are dug and joined together and within them is dug another smaller pit to serve as the substitute bedroom for the substitute beds of the king and queen (note that there are nine beds and nine screens, presumably one for each of the nine Underworld Deities). The construction of the ARÀḪ pits is more complex than the other pits, which suggests that it is not interchangeable with the other terms, but refers specifically to the underground chambers dug for the purification of the king and queen through the use of clay models as substitutes.

Like the "Taking Off the Earth" rituals, two rituals for Ishtar of Nineveh, (5) and (6), involve the participation of members of the royal family. Text (5) actually describes "pulling the deity up" from the pit with loaves of bread shaped like ears.[12] The goddess receives as an offering a bird whose method of presentation is, unusually, burial in the ground.

5 Ritual and Prayer to Ishtar of Nineveh.[13]

§13 The diviner says these words, and when they attract (lit. pull) her with the thick loaf, they fill a *KUKUB*-vessel with water besides. Then in that place they open up pits (*āpi*), and the diviner pulls the deity up from there seven times with "ear" loaves. He says, "if the king, queen, or princes—anyone—has done something and has buried it, I am now pulling it from the earth." He recites the same words again, and they do the same in that place also.

§14 He cuts into one thin loaf and sets it on a pine cone. He pours fine oil on it and the diviner having taken the "ear" bread pulls the deity from the fire fourteen times and says as follows: "I have pulled it from the fire."

§15 He recites the same words again. He sets down the "ear" bread at the soldier loaves and buries one large bird for Ishtar of Nineveh and *ḫūwalzi*-s. But they burn two birds for *unalzi.*

In (6), portions of the intestines, heart and some blood of the sacrificed sheep are placed into the Pit, which is then filled with bread. The remainder of the animal victim is butchered for human consumption.

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[12] The ears may have to do with listening to the pleas of the suppliant, as suggested by Hoffner (1967, 396-97).

[13] KUB 15.35 + KBo 2.9, translated by Collins in Hallo (1997, 164-65), with bibliography.

6 Festival for Ishtar of Niniveh.[14]
The queen comes forth, and the diviner opens up a Pit (^{d}*āpi-*) before the Storm God *marapši*. The diviner offers one sheep to the Storm God *marapši*, and the diviner cuts its throat downward for the Pit. He releases the blood into a cup, which he places on the ground before the Storm God *marapši*. Next the diviner (proceeds) to the raw intestines and heart (of the sacrifice) and cuts off a little. He takes a little blood as well and sets it down into the Pit. Then at the top he stops up the Pit with thick bread. They carry the sheep forth, and the temple servants cut it up.

The five Hurro-Hittite rituals that remain to be discussed ([7]–[11]), share one significant feature, namely the presence of a pig or piglet in the performance of the ritual. Texts (7) and (8) both concern fertility. The former describes a ritual in which a female suppliant stands over a pit and recounts the story of the creation of man as part of a rite to regain or ensure her own ability to conceive. Although no pit is expressly mentioned, the location at a riverbank resembles both (2) and (9), where pits *are* dug. Moreover, the myth of the creation of man is echoed in text (2). Thus, we are perhaps on solid ground in suggesting that a pit was utilized in (7) as well.

7 The Creation of Man by the Fate Deities.[15]
Let her give [bi]rth often like the pig. Away three times here and there […].

Then the patient takes a position over the pig and she steps beside the river from under it and says repeatedly: "When they took heaven and earth, the gods divided (it) up for themselves, and the upperworld deities took heaven for themselves, and the underworld deities took the land beneath the earth for themselves. So each took something for himself. But you, O River, have taken for yourself the purification, life, offspring, and the propagation. (If) now (someone) says something, (and this thing) becomes serious for him, so he comes to you, O River, and to the Fate Deities of the riverbank and to the Mother Goddesses (DINGIR.MAḪ.-MEŠ), who create human beings.

In (8), the fertility sought is not human, but agricultural. The fat bread, perhaps a type of short cake, and the genitalia of a sow are placed in a pit for the fertility of the earth.[16]

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[14] KUB 10.63 i 17-28, edited by Hoffner (1967, 391).

[15] Bo 3617 i 4'-17' with duplicates Bo 3078 ii and KBo 13.104:1ff., are edited by Otten and Siegelová (1970, 32-35).

[16] Compare the distribution lists of pig parts, including heads and genitalia, in the ration list KBo 20.16 i$^{!}$ passim + KBo 20.3 ii passim, and the duplicate KBo 2.12 v passim. A transliteration is available in Neu (1980, no. 13[+]14).

8 Hurro-Hittite Ritual and Incantation.[17]
Fat bread is made. [I] throw the fat bread in[to] a hole (*patteššar*). Then the[y] cut off the female genitals of a pig [and I throw them] down secretly.

Like texts (7) and (8), (9) appears to be a ritual designed to secure the fertility of the offerant. It is surely no accident that in all three cases, the animal is fully grown (and probably female).

9 The Ritual at the River.[18]
They tie up the pig, its […]. He [sets(?)] it down into a pit (*patteššar*), and they build a bridge over it for the sake of purity.

Then the patient steps onto (the bridge) over the pig.

(The text seems to skip what happens on the bridge and goes on to the next location, but the pig reappears on the reverse of the tablet eating bread that has been scattered for it.

Then they dig that place (dupl. five places) and they leave the hearths in the river.

While full grown pigs (specifically sows) were instruments of fertility, piglets, like puppies, were particularly effective purificants in ritual. By burying the creature after it has taken on the suppliant's impurity, one effectively returns the pollution to its source, the earth, as we see in Maštigga's ritual (10). While the pit is open, note that bread and wine are placed in the hole as well, presumably as offerings to the Underworld gods who otherwise do not figure in this ritual at all. In short, it can't hurt to throw an offering into the pit for these deities just in case.

10 Maštigga of Kizzuwatna's Ritual Against Family Quarrel.[19]
The old woman takes a piglet and lifts it over them (the patients) and says as follows, "It is fattened with grass (and) barley and as this one does not now see the sky and will not see again the (other) piglets, let these offerants in the same way not see the evil curses. § They wave the piglet (over) them. Then they kill it and dig the earth and place the piglet down. They place sweet bread down also and they pour wine. Then they fill (it) over (with) earth."

In Ḫantitaššu's Ritual (11), a piglet is killed over a pit, its throat slit, with the blood allowed to flow into the pit as is the custom. Unusually, this time the gods are being asked to enter the pit, not leave it. As in (1), (2) and (3), the images of the Underworld Deities are present for the offering. They are invoked to carry the message of the suppli-

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[17] KUB 12.44 iii 16-19, edited by Forrer (1922, 228).
[18] KUB 36.83 i 3-7, iv 5-9.
[19] 2Maåtigga ii 44-54, edited by Jakob-Rost (1953, 356-57).
[20] KBo 11.14 iii 6-10, 28-31, edited by Hoffner (1967, 390-91).

ant to the Sun Goddess of the Earth, for whom the pit has been dug and the offering of the blood of the piglet made. It is a purification, but, as in Maštigga's Ritual (10), purification and offering are one when the chthonic deities are involved.

11 Hantitaššu's Ritual.[20]
When it becomes night, the "lord of the word" digs up the earth (in the area of) the wooden bolt […]. He takes a piglet, and slits its throat downward into the pit (*ḫatteššar*), letting its blood flow downward. …

They bring (the images of) the former deities. They take […] there. Let them go and [in] the pit (*āpi-*) let them plead with the Sun Goddess of the Earth, so that whatever (sin) I have done let the gods forgive it for me.

Two texts, either because they are geographically (12) or chronologically (13) outside the sphere of Hurrian influence, testify to the use of pits in Anatolian ritual as well. Alli's Ritual (12), stemming from Arzawa in western Anatolia, does not utilize a pig for fertility or purification, nor is it necromantic in nature. It does confirm, however, what we already know, that sorcery and other evils may be disposed of in the earth, and is included here for the sake of completeness:

12 Ritual of Ālli, a Woman of Arzawa.[21]
The old woman takes up five loaves of bread, one vessel of beer, and a peg of *karšani*-wood. She goes outside, and nearby digs (a hole) in the ground, and puts the ritual materials in it. She scatters earth over and levels (it). She strikes the peg and says as follows: "Who(ever) has bewitched this one, now his sorcery I have taken back and I have placed it down into the earth and I have secured it. Let the sorcery and the evil dreams remain secured. Let it not come up again and let the dark earth hold it."

She comes a little away from there and alongside of the hole (*patteššar*), breaks one unleavened bread to Marwayan. The dog-man (and) the men(!) who turn before (him) <…>. She breaks one unleavened bread to the *miyanit* tongue, she breaks one unleavened bread to the dark earth, she breaks one unleavened loaf for the Sun God, and she says: "You, protect these things!"

Finally, (13) is an incantation to avert the ill affects of an evil omen and has its origins firmly in the Hattian sphere. The *karaš*-grain of a pig and the dung of a horse(?) are placed in a pit, along with—presumably—the blood that flows from the slit throat of the piglet. The piglet is then trussed(?) (cf. [9]) and after some activity involving nails, tin and doors, the piglet is cooked. The Sun Goddess of the

[21] KUB 24.9 ii 17'-30', edited by Jakob-Rost (1972, 32-35).

Earth receives a token portion from every cut of the meat and the remainder is eaten by the female attendants.

13 Incantation.[22]

[Whe]n the Moongod gives an omen and in the portent he strikes [a per]son[?], then I do as follows: I dig the earth. I take the *karaš*-grain of a pig (and) the dung of a h[orse(?)] into a pit (*ḫatteššar*). [After]ward, I slit (the throat of) a piglet.

If it is a girl child, I take a she-piglet. If it is a boy child I take a he-piglet, and I nail it up (i.e. truss it for cooking?). We will take seven nails of iron, seven nails of bronze, seven nails of copper (and) tin to the gate. We will allot (for this purpose) the door of the inner chamber. Wherever there is an opening (to patch with the tin), we will take that stone (i.e., the tin) and we will nail (it) (in) place.

A pin of copper—…—We draw it up and nail it up. They cook the piglet. Then they bring it back. I take a little bit (from) every body part and I present (them) to the Sungoddess of the Earth. Then I say as follows: [Hattian incantation.] I break an offering loaf.

I take the piglet and carry it into the inner chamber. The female attendants eat it. The bones, however, they bring to the kitchen and I sell them.[23]

We know from another text that the Sun Goddess has the power to turn an evil omen into a good one:

14 Ritual for the Underworld Deities.[24]

Regarding this bee, which you, O Sungoddess of the Earth, have sent, the king and queen are giving you this offering as a propitiatory gift of this bee. § O Sungoddess of the Earth, if you sent it (the bee) for evil, change it now and make it a bird portending good. …

"(O Sun Goddess of the Earth,) receive this ritual with your right hand (i.e. favorably). If it was a bird (portending) evil, you change it, O Sun Goddess of the Earth. Make it (a) favorable (omen) nine times over. 'The tongue (is) a bridge!'"

This may explain the offering made to her in response to the omen in (13). The offering of a piglet to this goddess, rather than a sheep (as possibly in [1]), has a precedent in Hantitaššu's Ritual (11). The choice of animal requires some explanation, since the pig is considered ritually unclean and inappropriate as an offering for the gods (Collins 1996). The explanation may lie in the pig's purificatory role and the fact that, where the chthonic deities are concerned, purification and offering are inseparable, as demonstrated in (10) and (11).

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[22] KUB 17.28 i 1-24, see Hauptman (1975, 66-67).

[23] The bones are perhaps sold as fertilizer.

[24] KBo 11.10 ii 21'-27' with duplicate KBo 11.72 ii 26'-30' (my translation); iii 14-17, translation is that of Beckman (1986, 25).

The Sun Goddess of the Earth receives another piglet offering in an Old Hittite incantation that employs sympathetic magic to ensure the fertility of the vineyard (15). Several lines after the incantation invoking the pig for fertility, the text goes on to list offerings of sheep and goat to various male gods. The sole female deity, the Sun Goddess of the Earth, is listed last, and, rather than a sheep, is provided with "one piglet to the fertile earth."

> **15 Benedictions for Labarna.**[25]
> Just as a single pig gives birth to many piglets, let every single branch of this vineyard, like the pig, bear many grape clusters. … One piglet to the fertile earth for the Sun Goddess of the Earth.

Corroboration for these rituals with pits and pig(let)s comes from the archaeology. A piglet burial was found within the Hittite rock sanctuary at Yazılıkaya (Hauptmann 1975, 65). Here a pig fetus was found buried in a pit. Among the bones were found four bronze pins, three of which were still stuck into the earth. Over the bones a terra-cotta lid had been nailed down.[26] Although none of the texts specifically reports nailing a piglet down in a ritual pit, as we have seen, a number testify to the placement of a piglet in such a pit. It is likely that the piglet was nailed down in order to render it harmless after having absorbed impurities from an offerant in a purification ritual, but it may at the same time have served as an offering to the chthonic powers.

Although particularly at home in the Luwian-Kizzuwatnean southeast, where Hurrian influence was greatest, ritual pits in Hittite magical rites were probably geographically widespread. Although many elements of the Hurrian-influenced rituals are of Hurrian or Mesopotamian origin, the presence of pigs is common to both Hurrian and Anatolian ritual, but appear earliest in the Anatolian examples. It is possible then that their use is an Anatolian feature that survived, and adapted itself to, the adoption of Hurrian ideas and practices. In any case, for the pig(let) and its connection with the Sun Goddess of the Earth, there is yet another comparison to be made.

The Thesmophoria is described by Burkert as the principal form of the Demeter cult in Greece, whose distinctive feature is the pig sacrifice. It is a festival to honor the goddess of agriculture, in which the women of the community celebrate among themselves in the

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[25] KUB 43.23 rev. 19'-22', 57'-58'. "Labarna" is a title of the Hittite king.

[26] The date of the lid could not be determined accurately because it was a type popular at Boghazköy from the Old Assyrian period onward.

sanctuary of the goddess (Burkert 1985, 242). Detienne, following Bruneau, distinguishes between two Thesmophorian ways of using pigs as sacrificial victims (1989, 134). In the first, occurring on the first day of the three day festival, piglets are hurled into a pit or chasm (*megara*), where they are left to rot. In the second, as part of the feast of the third day, the victims, adult animals (pregnant sows?, see Clinton, in press), are prepared in the manner of regular sacrificial offerings.

It is the first of these types of sacrifice that is of most interest here. The rotted remains of the piglets are retrieved by "Bailers" who place it on the altar of the goddess where it is mixed with seed. It was believed, according to the scholiast, that anyone fertilizing his field with this substance would have a good harvest. According to Burkert, "the manipulation of the decomposed remains of piglets to achieve a good harvest is the clearest example in Greek religion of agrarian magic" (1985, 244).

The sacrifice has a mythological explanation, which is the rape and death of Kore at the hands of the god of the Underworld, Hades. When Kore sank into the earth, the pigs of the swineherd Eubouleus were swallowed up as well. It is in memory of this that the pigs are sacrificed. Chandor (1976, 78) notes that this aetiology is missing from the Homeric Hymn to Demeter and surmises therefrom that it was not a part of the earliest tradition. In other words, there is no need to seek a similar aetiology in the Hittite material.

The separation from male society and the reclining of the women, during the festival, on litters made of a special wood with anaphrodisiac qualities to encourage mensus, serve to reaffirm the fecundity of the female participants in the festival (Detienne 1989, 147). In addition, the association of the pig with female sexuality and fertility is confirmed by Greek literature (Burkert 1983, 259).

The connection between fertility, the Underworld, and the sacrifice of piglets to a goddess connected with both, is compelling, however, a brief summary of the similarities and differences between the Greek and Anatolian phenomena is in order.

One difference lies in the slitting of the piglets' throats in the Hittite practice. This was typicial for animals sacrificed to the chthonic gods. In the Greek ritual, however, the piglets are cast down. No blood is allowed to flow—the animal is not an offering in that sense. In the cult of Demeter, the pits that receive the piglets seem to be permanant features in the sanctuaries, and numerous examples have been excavated with piglet bone remains still in them (for example, Priene, Acrocorinth [Stroud 1965], Cnidos, Agrigentum and Bitalemi [Kron 1992]). There are no votive statues

of pigs or of suppliants carrying pigs in the Hittite world. In fact, there are no examples of domestic pigs in Hittite art at all. In addition, the Hittite references are to single piglets sacrificed to the Goddess, whereas the Greek cult involved multiple suppliants and multiple piglets.

At the same time, some tantalizing parallels present themselves. At the Thesmophoria, pine cones and cakes are placed in the pits with the piglets, also as symbols of fertility. Although text (5) does not involve a piglet, a pine cone is placed in the pit with other offerings. Also, sweet and fat breads that serve as offerings to the chthonic gods in almost every instance are varieties of cakes and almost certainly denote fertility, as in text (8). The breads are placed into the pit with the piglets, and (14) even refers to the *karaš*-grain of a pig being mingled with the blood of the slain piglet in the pit. There is no suggestion, however, of the remains being extracted and used in a field. Rather it is likely, as suggested by (13) that the piglet was sacrificed directly in the field whose fertility was sought.

As part of the initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries of Demeter, initiates had to supply a pig for sacrifice.[27] The animal was a substitute for the initiate, "life was exchanged for life" (Burkert 1983, 258). Although having little do to with initiation, the animals sacrificed in the Hittite rituals described here are almost invariably substitutions for the patient or suppliant. This is particularly evident in the Ritual of "Taking Off the Earth" (4). In one royal substitution ritual, the king, addressing the Sun Goddess of the Earth, incants, "take these (substitutes). Set me free! Let me look upon the Sun God of Heaven with my eyes."[28]

A final parallel worth noting is that the women who participated in the Thesmorphia bore the ritual name of *Melissai*, Bees, "after the insect that symbolizes the conjugal virtues" (Detienne 1989, 145). The goddess in Anatolia who oversees the fertility of married women is Hannahanna, the grandmother. Hannahanna's sacred animal is

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[27] For a complete discussion of pig sacrifice in Greece, see Clinton (in press). For Greek animal sacrifice in general, see Jameson (1988). Clinton comments that "what is especially interesting about the pig is its use in such a great variety of ritual—(1) normal, so called "Olympian" sacrifice, (2) holocaustic sacrifice, (3) purifications, (4) bathing of the "mystic piglets" in Phaleron by the Eleusinian initiates, (5) and deposition of the piglets in pits at the Thesmophoria." In Anatolia, the variety of attested pig sacrifices is limited to purifications and deposition in pits, which may be purification, offering, or fertility, or some combination thereof.

[28] KUB 24.5 rev. 7-8, edited by Kümmel (1967, 12-13), translated by Goetze (1969, 355).

the bee, and she, like the Sun Goddess of the Earth, is attested on one festival occasion receiving a piglet as an offering.[29]

Somehow, the separate porcine associations of fertility and purification/offering to the supreme deity of the Underworld combined to generate a ritual *koiné* of Anatolian derivation[30] involving both elements and in which fertility itself becomes chthonian by virtue both of its symbolic association with the pig and of the ambiguity inherent in the term "earth" (as both cultivated/fertile soil and underworld). The Greeks shared both these associations for the pig(let). Clinton (in press), discussing pig sacrifice in Greece, similarly concludes that "in the Thesmophoria the deposition of piglets in the pits and the sacrifice of pregnant sows may be called 'chthonian,' for each action celebrates, in its own way, the fertility of the earth."

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[29] "[They dedicate(?)] one piglet to Ḫannaḫanna [and] they cook that same [pig]let in a pot." KBo 20.89 obv.(?) 9'-10'.

In this connection, note also the comparison that has been made between the Homeric Hymn to Demeter (Burkert 1979, 123-25) and the Anatolian series of myths about a deity who goes missing and must be coaxed back to his/her place in the cosmos. In one version of the Anatolian myth, the divine protagonist is Hannahanna (Hoffner 1998, no. 8), whose sacred bee is instrumental in nearly every version of the myth in restoring the deity. Closing this circle of connections, the Sun Goddess of the Earth is also associated with the bee, which she sends as an evil omen in (14).

[30] Alternatively, should we see in the ritual for Demeter a descendent of Hittite practices and in the goddess herself a Greek cooption of the Anatolian Sun Goddess of the Earth?

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CANAANITE MAGIC VS. ISRAELITE RELIGION: DEUTERONOMY 18 AND THE TAXONOMY OF TABOO

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Through the centuries, interpreters have typically attributed the ritual performances reported, listed, or alluded to in the Hebrew Bible to one of two distinct communities of antiquity: those peoples characterized as Canaanites performed rituals of magic, while those identified as Israelites were to engage in the rites of religion. As the most comprehensive catalogue of so-called magic and divination preserved in the Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy 18:9-11 has served as a major datum for most studies concerned with the topic of ancient Canaanite magic.[1] However, the following analysis of Deuteronomy 18 suggests that, while such a prevailing interpretive mode might find some basis in isolated biblical traditions, the Hebrew Bible hardly affords a unanimous voice on what distinguishes the domains of magic and religion, let alone how one is to recognize a Canaanite over against an Israelite.

An Analysis of Deuteronomy 18:9-11

Literarily speaking, Deuteronomy 18 forms part of the transition separating the final stages of the wilderness wanderings from the commencement of the conquest of Canaan. The more immediate context of Deuteronomy 18 is Moses' farewell speech on Mt. Nebo, and it is from this vantage point, overlooking the promised land of Canaan, that Moses contrasts several ritual professions with the roles of the king, levitical priest, and true prophet. In the end, he censures the former on the basis of their origins in Canaanite culture.

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[1] Cf. e.g., William Robertson Smith's lengthy article spanning two fascicles of the 1885 issue of the *Journal of Philology*, "On the Forms of Divination and Magic Enumerated in Deuteronomy 18.10,1, Part 1," and , "...Part 2," pp. 273-87 and pp. 113-28 respectively (in volumes 13/26 and 14/27). For recent studies and accompanying bibliographies, see S. D. Ricks, "The Magician as Outsider: The Evidence of the Hebrew Bible," in *Perspectives on Ancient Judaism V*, ed. P. Flesher (Lanham, MD, 1990), 125-34, esp. 131-34; F. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and its Near Eastern Environment: A Socio-Historical Investigation*, JSOTSS 142 (Sheffield, 1994), 230-33; A. Jeffers, *Magic & Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria*, SHCANE 8 (Leiden, 1996), 8ff., 67ff.

In the light of contextual considerations such as these, critics have repeatedly characterized Deut 18:9-14 as comprising part of a collection of laws concerning officials or *Ämtergesetze*, spanning 16:18-18:22. Furthermore, since at least the time of Wellhausen, interpreters have posited, in one version or another, the existence of an extensive redactional history for the composition of the *Ämtergesetze*.[2]

Recently, Lohfink identified the whole of 16:18-18:22 as a deuteronomistic (hereafter dtr) sketch of a constitution for the restoration of the nation composed during the exilic period.[3] The basis for his proposal is the strong affinity between the *Ämtergesetze* and characteristic dtr language. For example, the repeated forms *yrš*[4] (16:20; 17:14; 18:12, 14), *tw'bh* (17:4; 18:9, 12 [2x]), and *h'byr b'š* (18:10) are typical of dtr phraseology.[5] Furthermore, "torah" (*tôrāh*; 17:9 [*sic*?], 11, 18, 19) is found otherwise only in dtr redactional layers of Deuter-

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[2] J. Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des alten Testaments* (Berlin: 1899), 357; cf. A. Dillmann, *Deuteronomium* (Leipzig, 1886), 328; R. P. Merendino, *Das deuteronomische Gesetz. Eineliterarische, gattungs- und überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Dt 12-26* (Bonn, 1969), 405; H. D. Preuss, *Deuteronomium* (Darmstadt, 1982), 136-38; U. Rüterswörden, *Von der politischen Gemeinschaft zur Gemeinde: Studien zu Dt 16, 18-18,22* (Frankfurt am Main, 1987).

[3] N. Lohfink, "Die Sicherung der Wirksamkeit des Gotteswortes durch das Prinzip der Schriftlichkeit der Tora und durch das Prinzip der Gewaltenteilung nach den Ämtergesetz des Buches Deuteronomium (Dt 16,18-18,22)," in *Testimonium Veritati*, hrsg. H. Wolter (Frankfurt am Main, 1971), 143-55, "Kerygmata des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks," in *Die Botschaft und die Boten: Festschrift für Hans Walter Wolff*, hrsg. J. Jeremias und L. Perlitt (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1981), 87-100, "*j ra* ," in Band 3, Lieferung 8/9 of *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, hrsg. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, und H. J. Fabry (Stuttgart, 1982), 953-85, and review of *Von der politischen Gemeinschaft zur Gemeinde*, by U. Rüterswörden, *TLZ* 113 (1988): 425–30; G. Braulik, "Zur Abfolge der Gesetze in Deuteronomium 16,18-21,23: Weitere Beobachtungen," *Biblica* 69 (1988): 63-92. P. E. Dion, "Quelques aspects de l'interaction entre religion et politique dans le Deutéronome," *Science et Esprit* 30 (1978): 39-55, esp. 42-44, and "Deuteronomy and the Gentile World: A Study in Biblical Theology," *TJT* 1(1985): 200-21 has narrowed the boundaries of Lohfink's exilic constitution to 17:14-18:22.

[4] Following Hebrew transliteration standards set by *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*, ed. P. Alexander, J. Kutsko, J. Ernest, S. Decker-Lucke, and D. Petersen (Peabody, MA, 1999), 25-29.

[5] Lohfink, "Kerygmata," 92, and "*jāraš*," 953-85. For *yrš*, cf. the dtr texts 1 Kgs. 14:24; 21:26; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 17:8; 21:2. It shows up only in the parenetic framework, introduction and conclusion (never in the pre-dtr laws): 6:1, 18; 7:1, 17-24; 8:1, 7, 20; 9:1-6; 10:11; 11:5, 8-12, 22-25, 29, 31; 12:1, 2, 10, 29 (2x); 15:4; 19:1, 14; 21:1; 23:21 (ET 20); 25:19; 26:1; 27:2, 3, 4, 12; 28:21, 63; 29:1-7 (ET 2-8); 30:16, 18. These are viewed as dtr additions. For *tw'bh*, cf. the dtr texts 1 Kgs. 14:24; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 21:2 and the dtr text Deut. 12:31. For *h'byr b'š*, cf. the dtr texts 2 Kgs. 16:3; 17:17; 21:6 and the dtr text Deut. 12:31 (*śrp b'š*).

onomy.[6] Lohfink also pointed out that the law in 18:1-8 allows every rural Levite to offer sacrifice at the central sanctuary (presumably Jerusalem), although 2 Kgs. 23:9, part of the Josianic reform, did not grant this right.[7] Thus, according to Lohfink, Deut. 18:6-8 must be later as it could not be part of the law book which instigated, at least in part, the Josianic reform.[8] Owing to the fact that the priests are mentioned again in 17:18 as caring for the torah—a far reaching claim for the once rural, but now unified Levites—this text too is to be considered post-Josianic and therefore dtr.[9]

As with the *Ämtergesetze* more generally, the law of the prophet which comprises vv. 9-14 (the negative section) and vv. 15-22 (the positive section), has been assigned a complex redactional history.[10] García López has reconstructed four stages in the compositional history of Deut. 18:9-22: (1) a primitive text, vv. 10aα, 10b, 11, 12a; (2) a proto-deuteronomic redaction, vv. 9a, 14, 15a, 21, 22aß; (3) a redaction completed by the Dtr historian, vv. 9b, 10aß, 12b; and (4) a redaction related to Deuteronomistic History (hereafter DtrH) and

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[6] 1:5; 4:8, 44; 27:3, 8, 26 (2x); 29:20, 30, 40; 31:9, 11, 24, 26; 33:4, 10. Lohfink "Die Sicherung," 152-53 viewed 17:9-11 as an older text dealing with inquiry directed to God that was applied to Torah. This reapplication in turn has resulted in internal tensions within the pericope.

[7] The generally accepted position that 2 Kgs. 23:4-20 deliberately presents Josiah as in conformity with the demands of the law of Moses is presupposed here, cf. also A. D. H. Mayes, *The Story of Israel between Settlement and Exile: A Redactional Study of the Deuteronomistic History* (London, 1983), 131. While any comparison of these two passages runs into the difficulty of explaining the relationship between the priests and Levites, Emerton has argued with regard to the phrase, *kōhᵃnîm hal⁽ᵊ⁾wiyyim* kōl⁻ šēbeṭ lēwî*, "the priests, the Levites, the whole tribe of Levi," in Deut. 18:1, that asyndeton is rare while apposition is very common (J. A. Emerton, "Priests and Levites in Deuteronomy," *VT* 12 [1962]: 129-38; cf. P. Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew,* 2 vols., trans. and rev. T. Muraoka. [Rome, 1991], 477-81, 649-53).

[8] H.-D. Hoffmann, *Reform und Reformen: Untersuchungen zu einem Grundthema der deuteronomistischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Zürich, 1980), 208-226 is more skeptical about the existence of a law book per se forming the basis of Josiah's reform. Accordingly, the account of the law book's discovery is fictitious. 2 Kgs. 23:4-20 depends upon some vague historical traditions about a reform in Josiah's time and is a collection in one place of all references to the reform.

[9] Lohfink "Die Sicherung," 149. Following a long line of interpretation, A. D. H. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, New Century Bible Commentary, (Grand Rapids: 1979), 278-79; Preuss, *Deuteronomium*, 137-38, 180 distinguish between the rural Levites of Deuteronomy 18 and the priests of the high places in 2 Kings 23.

[10] See the summary of views in F. García López, "Un profeta como Moisés. Estudio crítico de Dt 18,9-22," in *Simposio biblico español*, ed. N. Fernandez Marcos, J. Trebolle Barrera, e J. Fernandez Vallina (Madrid, 1984), 289-308 and add Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, 279-83; Preuss, *Deuteronomium*, 138-39; Rüterswörden, *Politischen Gemeinschaft*, 85-87.

the concerns of Jeremiah, vv. 15b-20, 22aβ, 22b.[11] The weakness inherent in such a reconstruction is not the recognition that a dtr hand is present in 18:9-14 and vv. 15-22. Rather, it is the the accompanying theory of numerous dtr redactions and the propensity to atomize the pericope and to assign half and quarter verses to as many as four redactional strata for vv. 9-14.[12]

The language of Deut. 18:9-14 supports the notion that a dtr hand is at work, for it has clear links with dtr and other late texts. This is the case for v. 9b: *hgwym hhm*, "those nations."[13] The same applies for v. 9bα: *(t)lmd lʿśwt*, "learn to imitate."[14] Finally, v. 9bβ: *ktwʿbt hgwym*, "detestable ways of the nations" reflects the same associations.[15] Verse 9b cannot be separated from v. 9a as the latter, beginning as it does with a *kî* clause, demands an apodosis for the protasis and it can no longer be presumed that vv. 10-12a formed the original apodosis of a hypothetically older v. 9a, for as we shall argue shortly, the relative antiquity of these verses is in doubt. Moreover, the stereotypical opening to the law in 18:9a, *ky* + *bw'* + *'r.ṣ*, is found in 7:1; 8:7; 17:14; and 23:21 (ET 20) [*sic*?], all of which have been identified as forming part of the parenesis of the book.[16] Based on the fact that the form *yrš* shows up in each of these texts and that this form never shows up in the pre-dtr laws of Deuteronomy, Lohfink assigned all of these parenetic verses to a dtr hand.[17] He also argued for the dtr origins of the terms *ntn* and *'rṣ* in 18:9a.[18]

The dtr character of 18:9-12 gains further support from the detailed analysis of García López, in spite of his propensity to atomize

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[11] García López, "Un profeta como Moisés," 290-308. The author left the status of v.13 undecided. G. Seitz, *Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien zum Deuteronomium* (Stuttgart: 1971), 235-43 offered the following reconstruction: (1) a pre-deuteronomic text, vv. 10-12a; (2) a deuteronomic collection, vv.9, 12b, 14-15; (3) a deuteronomic elaboration, vv. 16-18; and (4) a dtr elaboration, vv. 19-22. He viewed v. 13 as simply late. Cf. also the redactional levels identified by Mayes, *Deuteronomy* 279-80: (1) the oldest stage, vv. 10-12a; (2) a deuteronomic legislation, vv.9, 12b; (3) a post-dtr addition to the law, vv. 15-18 (v. 14 is a connecting link); and (4) a still later addition, vv. 19-22. Verse 13 is an isolated later addition.

[12] See Th. Römer and A. de Pury, "Deuteronomistic Historiography (DH): History of Research and Debated Issues" in *Israel Constructs Its History: Deuteronomisitc Historiography in Recent Research*, ed. A. de Pury, Th. Römer, and J-D. Macchi, JSOTSS 306. (Sheffield 2000), 24-141, esp. 67-72, 97-104.

[13] Deut. 28:65; 29:17 (ET 18); Zech. 14:3; the dtr addition, Deut. 17:14.

[14] Cf. Deut. 4:1, 2, 14; 6:1; 20:18. 17:19 also uses l-m-d.

[15] Deut. 20:18; 1 Kgs. 14:24; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 21:2; Ezek. 16:4; Ezra 9:1; 2 Chr. 28:3; 33:2.

[16] Cf. also the related 12:29; 19:1; and 21:1.

[17] Lohfink, "Kerygmata," 92, "*j ra* " 953-85, and review of Rüterswörden, 427-28.

[18] Lohfink, "Kerygmata," 92-96.

the text. He astutely noted the linguistic affinities between 18:9-12 and the dtr text 2 Kgs. 16:3 (as indicated below by the underscored text):[19]

	2 Kgs. 16:3		Deut. 18:10-12
v. 3ba	*wgm ʾt-bnw hʿbyr bʾš*	v. 10a	*lʾ-ymṣʾ bk mʿbyr bnw-wbtw bʾš*
v. 3bß	*ktʿbwt hgwym*	v. 9b	*lʾ-tlmd l ʿśwt ktʿbt hgwym hhm*
v. 3bc	*ʾšr hwryš yhwh ʾtm mpny bny yśrʾl*	v. 12b	*ky . . . yhwh ʾlhyk mwryš ʾwtm mpnyk*

He also pointed out that the formula *hʿbyrbn*(-) (*wbt*[-])*ʾbʾš* in v. 10a shows up only in late texts.[20] In fact, the entire list of forbidden practices in Deut. 18:10b-12a are, with the lone exception of *ḥbr ḥbr* (owing to its rare occurrence), most frequently attested in passages of the DtrH.[21] Lohfink also listed the extensive parallels between Deut. 18:10b-11 and dtr 2 Kgs. 21:6 (the brackets below indicate expansions, not parallels):[22]

2 Kgs. 21:6	Deut. 18:10b-12a
wĕhe ʿĕbîr ʾet-bĕnô bāʾēš	*maʿăbîr bĕnô-ûbittô bāʾēš*
	[*qōsēm qĕsāmîm*]
wĕʿônĕn	*mĕʿônēn*
wĕniḥēš	*ûm*(*ĕ*)*naḥēš*
	[*ûm*(*ĕ*)*kaššēp wĕḥōber ḥāber*]
wĕʿāśāh ʾôb wĕyiddĕʿōnî(*m*)	*wĕšōʾēl ʾôb wĕyiddĕʿōnî*
	[*wĕdōrēš ʾel-hammētîm*]

In view of these close linguistic ties, it would appear that Deut. 18:10-12 might comprise an expansion on 2 Kgs. 21:6, but more on this below. Nevertheless, some critics assign 18:11 to a pre-exilic compositional stratum. The early compositional date for 18:11 is founded upon the (often unstated) premise that the verse preserves an old law banning necromancy reflected in Isa. 8:19; 19:3; 29:4; and 1 Sam. 28:3, 7-9.[23] But the argument for the early attestation of *ʾôbôt* and *yiddĕʿōnîm* in v.11 rests on shaky ground. In addition to their

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[19] García López, "Un profeta como Moisés," 296-97.

[20] García López, "Un profeta como Moisés," 297 n.49; cf. Lev. 18:21; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; 23:10; (Jer. 23:35; Ezek. 16:21; 20:26) 20:31; (23:27); 2 Chr. 33:6.

[21] Cf. 1 Sam. 28:3, 7, 9; 1 Kgs. 14:24; 20:23; 2 Kgs. 9:22; 16:3; 17:17; 21:2, 6; and 23:24.

[22] Lohfink, review of Rüterswörden, 428. He also included 1 Sam. 28:7-9 which we take to be part of a dtr or post-dtr addition to the DtrH spanning 28:3-25, cf. B. B. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition* (Winona Lake, 1996), 201-20.

[23] Cf. e.g., G. A. Smith, *The Book of Deuteronomy in the Revised Version: With Introduction and Notes,* (Cambridge, 1918), 231.

occurrence in what comprise dtr redactional texts of first Isaiah, Isa. 8:19; 19:3; and 29:4, the *ʾôbôt* and *yiddᵉʿōnîm* occur otherwise only in the dtr texts 2 Kgs. 21:6 and 23:24, in three texts from the Holiness Code (hereafter HC), Lev. 19:31; 21:6, 27, and in still later texts of the Chronicler, 1Chr. 10:13 and 2Chr. 33:6 (= 2Kgs. 21:6).[24] Furthermore, they are entirely absent in the remaining prophetic traditions both pre-exilic and exilic. Neither Amos nor Hosea, nor the Elijah-Elisha traditions for that matter speak out against the *ʾôbôt* and *yiddᵉʿōnîm*. Likewise, 1 Sam. 28:3-25 (vv. 3, 7-9) evinces extensive evidence for its dtr or post-dtr character.[25] In fact, the existence of a supposed pre-Deuteronomic level for the texts of DtrH has been recently challenged.[26]

Once 18:11 is assigned to a dtr hand, the same must be attributed to v. 12a, for at the least this first half of v. 12 presupposes v. 11. Moreover, the suffix on *ʾwt-m* in v. 12b presupposes *hgwym hhm* in v. 9b and is therefore dependent upon at least that half verse. In addition, the forms *yrš* as well as *mpny*, both of which have been labeled as dtr by Lohfink, show up in v. 12b (and recall the comparison of v. 12b with the dtr text 2 Kgs. 16:3).[27] Deut. 18:14 likewise contains a reference to *yrš*, while the phrase *mqrb-* (*m*)*ʾḥy-* in vv. 15 and 18 has close affinities with 17:15, a passage in the law of the king, 17:14-20. The whole of the law of the king is generally recognized as dtr owing to its language, presumed setting, and the analogies it shares with 1 Sam. 8:5-20; 10:17-25, and 1 Samuel 12.[28] Finally, as regards vv. 16-22, commentators generally acknowledge the dtr origin of these clos-

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[24] On the dtr redactional character of, Isa. 8:19; 19:3; and 29:4, cf. H. Barth, *Die Jesaja-Worte in der Josiazeit* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1977), 152-56, 184-90, 285-90 and Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead*, 138-43, 147-65.

[25] Cf. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead*, 201-20 for an extensive treatment of 1 Sam. 28.

[26] For the dtr or post-dtr redaction of 1 Sam. 28:3-25, cf. K.-D. Schunck, *Benjamin: Untersuchungen zur Entstehung und Geschichte eines israelitischen* Stammes (Berlin, 1963), 84-85, 94-95; H.-D. Hoffmann, *Reform und Reformen*, 293-300; J. Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven and London, 1983), 261-300; F. Foresti, *The Rejection of Saul in the Perspective of the Deuteronomistic School: A Study of 1 Sm 15 and Related Texts* (Rome, 1984), 86-90, 130-36. Against a pre-Deuteronomic level for DtrH, cf. S. L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History* (Leiden, 1991).

[27] Lohfink, "*j ra* ," 661, 674-75.

[28] E.g., *yrš* and *ky* + *bw*ʾ + *ʾṣ* in 17:14 and cf. Lohfink, "Die Sicherung," 149-51, and review of Rüterswörden,
427-28; Preuss *Deuteronomium*, 137. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, 271, although he acknowledged the presence of dtr additions to 17:14-20 (vv. 16, 18-19, 20b), viewed the dtr texts in 1 Samuel as dependent upon Deuteronomy 17.

ing verses.[29] By way of summary then, the extensive dtr language present throughout Deut. 18:9-22 points to the work of a dtr hand. This reconstruction gains additional support from a detailed examination of the other ritual practices mentioned in Deut. 18:10-11.

The rite of human sacrifice as reflected in the phrase *maʿăbîr bĕnô-ûbittô bāʾēš*, "the one who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire," was part of the Yahwistic cult in pre-exilic (and exilic?) times, but the dtr circle, or those later traditions susceptible to dtr influence, attached this practice to a cult devoted to a supposed Canaanite deity named Molek and then condemned it. As for its original legitimacy in the Yahwistic cult, Isa. 30:33 clearly connects Yahweh and the Tophet, and if no such connection was intended in this allusion to Assyria's destruction, then one would have expected some disclaimer to that effect. In any case, the sacrifice of the first born to Yahweh and the Molek sacrifice were possibly related, if not one and the same cult.[30] Although the former required that first born sons be sacrificed to Yahweh, while the latter listed children generally, and of both sexes, as sacrifices to Molek, the fact that daughters could legally substitute for sons as first born heirs, as Num. 27:1-8 and the texts from Emar and Nuzi demonstrate, favors their commonality.[31] In other words, the two traditions might reflect the same or similar cult but from complementary perspectives, the one more narrowly construed and the other more broadly based. Therefore, texts that refer to the sacrifice of the first born to Yahweh, such as Gen. 22:1-14; Exod. 13:2, 12-13, 15; 22:28-29 (ET 29-30); 34:19-20; Micah 6:6-7; and Ezek. 20:25-26, 31 can be related to the Molek cult. Moreover, Molek's connections with Baal (cf. Jer. 2:23; 3:24; 19:5; 32:35) are more likely part of the inventive dtr rhetorical po-

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[29] Cf. Preuss, *Deuteronomium*, 138. Mayes, *Deuteronomy* 279-80, 282-83; García López, "Un profeta como Moisés," 300-04 recognized the dtr origins of most of vv. 16-22.

[30] The evolutionary scheme proposed by S. Ackerman, *Under Every Green Tree: Popular Religion in Sixth-century Judaism*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 46 (Atlanta, 1992), 138-39 presupposes an early date for the processes underlying the relevant Pentateuchal texts. Against her equation of Baal Hamon and El (p.137), cf. J. Day, *Molech: A God of Human Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 41; (Cambridge, 1989), 37-40. For an independent argument in favor of their partial connection, cf. most recently J. D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven and London, 1993), 18-24.

[31] On the relevant Emar and Nuzi materials, cf. Z. Ben-Barak, "The Legal Status of the Daughter as Heir in Nuzi and Emar," in *Society and Economy in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1500-1000 B.C.)*, ed. M. Heltzer and E. Lipi ski, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 23 (Leuven, 1988), 87-97.

lemic to "Canaanize" what was once a non-dtr, but Yahwistic, practice.[32]

Whether or not Molek and Yahweh are to be equated, in the end, begs the question. Passages like Jer. 7:31; 19:5; 32:35; Ezek. 23:38-39; Lev. 20:3; Zeph. 1:5 in any case, indicate that the Molek cult was considered by some sectors of Israelite society as part of the Yahweh cult. Furthermore, the location of the Molek cult in the Hinnom Valley might only allude to its controversial role within the Yahweh cult. That is to say, sacrifices to Molek may have been observed in the temple precinct in the days of Ahaz (and Hezekiah) and Manasseh, but moved to the Valley in the initial stages of Josiah's reign and again thereafter as Jer. 7:31-32; 19:5; and 32:35 would suggest.[33] It should be noted that the two references in 2 Kgs. 16:3 and 21:6—not to mention its observance in the north mentioned in 17:17—do not locate the Molek cult at Tophet, and Josiah's defilement of Tophet in 2 Kings 23:10 does not explicitly attribute its observance there to either Ahaz or Manasseh. In other words, the Molek cult as portrayed in dtr and related traditions was probably not restricted to Tophet. In fact, texts like 2 Kgs. 21:3-6 and 23:11-12 assume the worship of several deities such as Baal, Asherah, the host of heaven, and the solar deity as having taken place in the Jerusalem temple precinct. Alternatively, the author in 2 Kgs. 23:10 might only be highlighting the Tophet as the major cultic location dedicated to what the writer perceived to be the Molek cult. In other words, it was not the only Molek shrine.

Even if one were to grant for the sake of argument that Molek was Yahweh's chthonic aspect or an independent netherworld deity of the Yahwistic cult in late pre-exilic Judah, one would hardly expect the dtr or related traditions to acknowledge openly such a reality. 2 Kgs. 21:3-6 depicts the worship of several deities in the Jerusalem temple precinct as "syncretistic" and "Canaanite" in origin. Such a perspective is clearly the invention of a dtr rhetorical polemic in the case of Asherah, for other data favor her earlier status as the consort of Yahweh in non-dtr forms of Yahwism. Thus, the association of the god Molek with the practice of human sacrifice might also be the purposeful invention of the dtr and related traditions. Convincing

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[32] In fact, the unqualified form of the law of the first born in Exod. 22:28-29 (ET 29-30) might have its echo in Ezek. 20:26, as neither presuppose the option of redeeming the first born found in the parallel and, we would suggest, late legislative texts, Exod. 13:2, 12-13, 15 (P) and 34:19-20 (P, not J).

[33] The DtrH does not depict Hezekiah as purging the Molek cult, cf. 2 Kgs. 18:1-4.

extra-biblical evidence for Molek's (= Malik's) chthonic associations, let alone his patronage of the cult of child sacrifice, has yet to be recovered from Syria-Palestine.[34] In fact, the texts from Ugarit cast doubt even on his more general chthonic associations.[35] In other words, the dtr traditions attempted to distance (artificially) human sacrifice from Yahweh and the Yahwistic cult by making Molek the patron deity of the cult, whereas the non-dtr traditions did not.

A similar rhetorical strategy was implemented in the case of the second practitioner listed in Deut. 18:10, *qōsēm qĕsāmîm*, "the augur." Both Isa. 3:2 and Micah 3:6-7, 11 establish the legitimacy of this practice in pre-exilic Yahwistic religion, but it too is condemned in later dtr circles (1 Sam. 15:23; 28:8; 2 Kgs. 17:17) and dependent texts.[36] A possible reference to augury in the redacted text, Isa. 2:6, not only supports the dtr concern to condemn such a practice, but it also offers a possible clue to its perceived origin. That Isa. 2:5-9 is a dtr addition is supported by the dtr expression which shows up in v. 8 *ma^{a}śēh yādāyw*, "the work of x's hands."[37] Likewise, the verb *hištaḥ^{a}wâ* in v. 8 might evince dtr influence.[38] These and other data confirm the view that vv. 5-9 comprise a later dtr addition to 2:6-21 (22).[39] For example, critics insert *qōsemîm*, "augurs," before *miqqedem* in v. 6 following the targumim and appeal to haplography in the MT, "Surely you have rejected your people, O house of Jacob, because they are full of augurs from the East, and of soothsayers like the Philistines, and *they strike hands with foreigners*."[40] In this rendition, the

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[34] Cf. S. M. Olyan, *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel* (Atlanta, 1988), 11-13 and M. S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (New York, 1990), 132-38.

[35] A god list from Ugarit equates Resheph, not Malik (= Molek?), with Nergal; cf. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead*, 93-100 for a recent assessment of the Ugaritic evidence for a deity Malik.

[36] Jer. 14:14; 27:9; 29:8; Ezek. 12:24; 13:6, 7, 9, 23; 21:29, 34 (ET 21,29); 22:28; Isa. 44:25; Zech. 10:2.

[37] Cf. Deut. 4:28; 27:15; 2 Kgs. 22:17; M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford, 1972), 324.

[38] Cf. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 321.

[39] Cf. H. Wildberger, *Jesaja: Das Buch, der Prophet, und seine Botschaft*, 1. Teilbd. *Jesaja 1-12* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1972), 95-96; H. Barth, *Die Jesaja-Worte*, 222-23; O. Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary* (Philadelphia, 1983), 6, 56-66 and esp. his survey of opinion on 63-66 and n. 33. M. A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-4 and the Post-Exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition,* BZAW 171 (Berlin, 1988), 176 viewed vv. 6b-9a as original to the oracle, but in so doing, was forced to exclude v. 9b from consideration in order to claim that this pericope of accusation would lack a judgment statement and therefore could not have stood independently on its own.

[40] Although v. 6c is problematic, it clearly refers to Israel's illicit relations with the nations.

formerly legitimate augur is in this late text described as a foreign import from Mesopotamia and condemned (or, less likely in view of the passages to follow, the author intends only to condemn an adopted foreign version of augury irrespective of its specific origins).

The condemnation of the augur is taken up again in the story of Balaam but indications are that Numbers 22-24 is likewise a relatively late composition.[41] In 22:7, the elders of Moab and Midian carry *qĕsāmîm bĕyādām*, that is, "fees for augury in their hand" for Balaam's hire.[42] Balaam is generally recognized as a foreign seer.[43] It is most curious that this foreign version of augury in 22:7 is not condemned.[44] Only in the story of Balaam's ass, 22:22-35, a secondary addition, does the writer polemicize against Balaam and, indirectly, his foreign augury.[45] In Josh. 13:22, a late P addition, the prophet Balaam is likewise polemically labeled the augur, or *haqqôsēm*.[46] Not only does this text confirm the late foreign associations of augury, it also points to the *raison d'être* for its eventual condemnation. In spite of its earlier legitimacy (cf. Isa 3:2, Micah 3:6-7), augury's foreign parallels were cited as the rationale for its proscription.

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[41] So H. Rouillard, *La pericope de Balaam (Nombres 22-24): La prose et les "oracles"* (Paris, 1985) whose work is not mentioned in M. S. Moore, *The Balaam Traditions: Their Character and Development* (Atlanta, 1990). Note that the episode of Agag is mentioned in 24:7, a story attributed to Saul's day in what is recognized as a late text, 1 Samuel 15. Moreover, vv. 17-18 speak of the wars of David against Edom and Moab. Rouillard proposed four redactional stages for the Balaam story; (N1) 22:2-21; 22:36-23:26 [650-40 B.C.E.], (N2) 22:22-35 [after Josiah's reform], (N3) 23:27-24:6 [exilic], and (N4) 24:7-24 [soon after the exile]. Having compared the Balaam story and Second Isaiah, J. Van Seters, review of *La péricope de Balaam (Nombres 22-24)*, by H. Rouillard, *JSS* 31 (1986): 245-47 dates Rouillard's N1, N3, and N4 to the exilic period, while N2 constitutes a secondary addition. In his second installment to his commentary on Numbers, B. Levine, *Numbers 21-26*, The Anchor Bible 4A (New York, 2000), 232-37 dates the original composition of the Balaam poems to the first half of the 9th century, the narratives to the late 7th century or shortly thereafter, and the story of Balaam's ass to the post-exilic period.

[42] Following the *RSV*.

[43] Some commentators take 22:5 as indicative of Balaam's Syrian origins where he is identified as the son of Beor at Pethor, by the River in the land of Amaw, but see now Levine, Numbers 21-36, 147-49 who, following the Samaritan and Vulgate traditions, emends the phrase to read "the land of the Ammonites." 23:7 places Balaam in Aram. P. J. Budd, *Numbers* Word Biblical Commentary (Waco, 1984), 254 (n. 5b) noted both the Syrian and northern Mesopotaman locations of Amaw proposed by scholars, but preferred to identify Balaam as a Mesopotamian seer (cf. p. 272).

[44] This verse is found in Rouillard's N1 stratum and is Josianic in date according to the author.

[45] Rouillard's N2.

[46] Cf. Josh. 13:21-22; Numbers 31. On the whole of Josh. 13-19 as a late P addition, cf. Van Seters, *In Search of History*, 331-37.

Both the "soothsayer," or *mĕʿônēn*, and the "sorcerer," or *mĕkaššēp*, of Deut. 18:10 require detailed treatments. At first glance, Micah 5:11 (ET 12) and Isa. 2:6 appear to substantiate the ban on these two practices during pre-exilic times (recall that Isa. 2:6 also mentions the augur). However, the dtr status of Micah 5:9-13 (ET 6- 14) has been repeatedly defended.[47] The presence of the Hiphil of the verb *k-r-t* suggests dtr influence (vv. 9, 10, 11, 12 [ET 10, 11, 12, 13]).[48] Moreover, as pointed out above, the phrase *maʿăśēh yādêka*, "the work of x's hands," in v. 12b (ET 13b) is a characteristic dtr expression[49]. The verbal form *hištaḥăwâ*, "bow down," in the same half verse is as well.[50] Furthermore, the root *n-ṭ-š* in v.13 is typical of dtr-Jer.[51] As outlined above, Isa. 2:6 exhibits evidence of a dtr hand. The soothsayer shows up otherwise only in (dtr) passages of the DtrH (2 Kgs. 21:6), in late prophetic passages (Jer. 27:9; Isa. 57:3), in the HC (Lev. 19:26), and in the Chronicler (2 Chr. 33:6 = 2 Kgs. 21:6).

The sorcerer too is attested in a (dtr) text of the DtrH (2 Kgs. 9:22), in late prophetic texts (Jer. 27:9; Isa. 47:9,12; Nahum 3:4; Mal. 3:5; Dan. 2:2) and in the Chronicler (2 Chr. 33:6 = 2 Kgs. 21:6).[52] In exilic and post-exilic prophetic traditions, this profession is connected with Mesopotamian influences, particularly Babylonian (Isa. 47:9,12) and Assyrian (Nahum 3:4).[53] In sum, soothsayers and sorcerers are depicted as relative late comers to Yahwistic religion, as foreign, namely, Mesopotamian imports, and are therefore condemned.

The next practitioner, the "diviner," or *mĕnaḥēš*, is never mentioned in pre-exilic or exilic prophetic texts. It occurs in (dtr) texts of the DtrH (1 Kgs. 20:33; 2 Kgs. 17:17; 21:6), in the HC (Lev. 19:26),

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[47] I. Willi-Plein, *Vorformen der Schriftexegese innerhalb des Alten Testaments. Untersuchungen zum literarischen Werden der auf Amos, Hosea und Micha zurückgehenden Bücher im hebräischen Zwölfprophetenbuch* (Berlin, 1971), 96-97. J. Jeremias, "Die Bedeutung der Gerichtsworte Michas in der Exilszeit," *ZAW* 83 (1971): 330-54, esp. 343-46; J. L. Mays, *Micah: A Commentary* (Philadephia, 1976), 25-27, 124-25 date the passage to the exile. For dtr language throughout chapters 4-5, see H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheton 4. Micha* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1982), 132-35 and note the reference to Babylon as the place of exile in 4:10. For a survey of opinion, cf. B. Renaud, *La formation du livre de Michée: Tradition et actualisation* (Paris, 1977), 262-71, who accepts the notion of a dtr redaction in Micah (pp.387-99), but whose conclusion that 5:9b-13 (ET 10b-14) is pre-exilic owing to its close relation to Isa. 2:6-8 does not adequately take into account the compositional history of the latter passage.

[48] Cf. Lohfink, "Kerygmata," 97.

[49] Cf. Deut. 4:28; 27:15; 2 Kgs. 22:17; Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy,* 324.

[50] Cf. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy*, 321.

[51] Jer. 12:14; cf. Deut. 29:27 (ET 28); 1 Kgs. 14:15; Amos 9:15, all with reference to the exile; so Wolff, *Dodekapropheton*, 132-33.

[52] For the references in the Yahwist, Exod. 7:11 and 22:18 (ET 19), see below.

[53] Cf. also Mal. 3:5; Dan. 2:2.

and in the Chronicler (2 Chr. 33:6 = 2 Kgs. 21:6). Like the practice of augury, it is also found in the late story of Balaam, Numbers 22-24.[54] Balaam is described as one well versed in the foreign arts of divining (23:23, cf. also 24:1) and augury (23:23, cf. also 22:7). As noted above, it is indeed surprising that there is no condemnation of Balaam as diviner and augur except in the secondary addition of Num. 22:22-35.[55] In 23:23, possibly part of the earliest section of the story, there is no denunciation.[56]

Finally, the "charmer," or *ḥōbēr ḥāber* is likewise never mentioned in pre-exilic prophetic texts, but like the sorcerer, the charmer is depicted in Isa. 47:9,12 as having Babylonian connections (cf. vv. 1, 5 and Dan. 2:2). Having concluded that Hebrew *ḥ-b-r* was cognate with Akkadian *ubbūru*, "bind magically," Held has suggested that Isa. 47:9, 12 comprises a satire on Neo-Babylonian magic.[57]

In sum, none of the practices listed in Deuteronomy 18 were condemned in pre-exilic prophetic traditions. Neither Hosea nor Amos nor, for that matter, the Elijah-Elisha school stood in opposition to them. Two of the practices, human sacrifice and augury, were compatible with earlier Yahwistic religion and only later condemned in dtr circles. The remaining four, soothsaying, sorcery, divining, and charming, were not attested in pre-exilic texts. This might indicate that while these professions were compatible with earlier forms of Yahwism (admittedly the texts are silent on this point), they came to pose a threat to dtr ideology only by the exilic perod or thereafter. When they do show up in later dtr texts or texts influenced by dtr ideology, they are depicted as illicit practices and outlawed.

The prophetic traditions connect the forbidden status of these practices to their foreign attachments. In three, sorcery, divining, and

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[54] Rouillard's N1 and N3.

[55] Rouillard's N2.

[56] Rouillard's N1.

[57] M. Held, "Studies in Biblical Lexicography in Light of Akkadian," *EI* 16 (1982): 76-85 [English summary 254.* *Maqlu* I:4-5); cf. M. S. Smith, "The Magic of Kothar, The Ugaritic Craftsman God in *KTU* 1.6 VI 49-50," *RB* 91 (1984): 379 and n. 11. It also shows up in Ps. 58:6 (ET 5). The connection with Ugaritic *ḫbr* in *KTU* 1.6:VI:49 and *RIH* 78/20:10 by Y. Avishur, "The Ghost-Expelling Incantation from Ugarit (Ras Ibn Hani 78/20)," *UF* 13(1981): 16,22-23, followed by M. Dijkstra, "Once Again: The Closing Lines of the Ba al Cycle (*KTU* 1.6.VI.42ff.)," *UF* 17 (1985): 147-52, is questionable; cf. P. Bordreuil and A. Caquot, "Les textes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découverts en 1978 à Ibn Hani," *Syria* 57(1980): 348, 350; J. C. de Moor, "An Incantation Against Evil Spirits (Ras Ibn Hani 78/20)," *UF* 12(1980): 429, 431; A. Caquot, "Une nouvelle interprétation de la tablette ougaritique de Ras Ibn Hani 78/20," *Orientalia* n.s. 53 (1984): 163-76 who connect Ugaritic *ḫbr* with Hebrew *ḥābēr*, "companion."

charming, Mesopotamian associations are explicit. Nevertheless, the "foreign origins" tradition as a basis for proscription was, in the case of augury, a clear case of rhetorical polemic, for augury is depicted in other biblical traditions as compatible with pre-exilic Yahwistic religion. As we pointed out previously, such purposeful distortion is characteristic of the dtr ideology. The same rhetorical strategy is evident in the dtr polemics against Manasseh, the alleged bull cult of Jeroboam, the cult of Asherah, and, perhaps, the cult of Molek or human sacrifice. Admittedly, in the case of sorcery, divining, and charming—all possible late comers to Israelite tradition—the stated Assyrian and Babylonian influences might reflect genuine instances of foreign, imperial "syncretism" of what constituted a local polytheistic cult. Alternatively, perhaps their similarity with already extant Israelite forms gave rise to the ban on their observance. In any case, whether these attachments are real or contrived, as in the case of augury, a foreign origins scenario played a central role in the dtr polemic against these practices.

Another observation alluded to earlier lends confirmation to the exilic or post-exilic compositional setting for at least vv. 10-11 of Deuteronomy 18. Of the various lists of illicit practices which include the *ʾôbôt* and *yiddᶜōnîm*, Deut. 18:10-11 is clearly the most expansive with its list of seven or eight ritual practices.[58] A comparison of the related lists in 2 Kgs. 21:6 and 2 Chr. 33:6 indicates that the inventory tended to expand over time. The addition in 2 Chr. 33:6 to the five item list in 2 Kgs. 21:6 involves a profession attested only in late prophetic texts, namely, the sorcerer (cf. dtr Micah 5:11 [ET 12]; Jer. 27:9; and Isa. 47:9,12). In Deut. 18:10-11, the sorcerer and three other professions, the augur, charmer, and consulter of the dead, were added to what probably comprised an earlier inventory of outlawed ritual professions. These items are otherwise condemned only in late texts (Isa. 47:9, 12 and dtr Isa. 2:6 and 8:19). Thus, Deut.18:10-11 might comprise a later stage in an ever expanding inventory of illicit ritual professions.

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[58] Cf. the following passages for lists of three or more: Lev. 20:2-6; 1 Sam. 28:3, 7-9; 2 Kgs. 17:17; 21:6; Isa. 8:19; Jer. 27:9; 2 Chr. 33:6. The practitioner *šōʾēl ʾôb wĕyiddᶜōnî*, "he who inquires of the One-who-returns and the Knower," is one who invokes ghosts. For the identity of the *ʾôb* and the *yiddᶜōnî* as ghosts, it should be noted that the phrase, in Deut. 18 *šōʾēl ʾôb wĕyiddᶜōnî* stands in apposition to "the necromancer" *dōrēš ʾel-hammētîm*, "He who consults the dead ones." Likewise, the phrase, *dirĕšû ʾel-hāʾōbôt wĕʾel-hayyiddᶜōnîm*, in Isa. 8:19 is semantically paralleled by *yirōš... ʾel-hammētîm*. Note also that the LXX omits the copula throughout Deut. 18:10-11, and recall that asyndeton is rare while apposition is more common in biblical Hebrew.

Admittedly, foreign, but non-Mesopotamian, origins are attributed to some of the above practices. In 1 Kgs. 20:33, the Syrians are depicted as diviners, while in 2 Kgs. 9:22 sorcery appears in Phoenician dress. Moreover, the augur and the soothsayer are found among the Philistines in 1 Sam. 6:2 and Isa. 2:6 in spite of the fact that the augur was compatible with pre-exilic Yahwistic religion. The diviner and sorcerer are depicted in Egyptian dress in Gen. 30:27; 44:5, 15 and Exod. 7:11 (cf. also Exod. 22:18 [ET 19]). As the preceding analysis demonstrates, however, the preponderance of references assume Mesopotamian influence. In other words, eastern magical traditions were negatively influential in the formation of the biblical traditions' idealized world, and the passages depicting foreign, but non-Mesopotamian, connections point to a subsequent rhetorical expansion on that dtr perspective. In these instances, the "ethnic" boundaries were widened so as to include (and condemn.) other foreign, but now local, non-Israelite peoples (Egypt being the lone exception).

The compositional histories of those texts that identify foreign, but non-Mesopotamian, origins for the professions listed in Deuteronomy 18 confirm the secundary association of these ritual practices with the local populations. 1 Kgs. 20:33 and 2 Kgs. 9:22 probably constitute later additions to DtrH.[59] Isa. 2:6 is a dtr addition and 1 Samuel 1-7 might be the product of an exilic dtr hand.[60] Exod. 7:11 and 22:18(ET 19) might be part of a P or dtr redaction, and the Genesis texts might be modeled on passages in the DtrH.[61] In sum, contrary to the impression one might gain by reading only Deuteronomy 18 in isolation, none of the practices therein can claim a distinctively "Canaanite" cultural origin.[62]

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[59] So G. H. Jones, *2 Kings*, New Century Bible (Grand Rapids, 1984), 337-39, 450-54.

[60] So Van Seters, *In Search of History*, 346-53.

[61] For exilic references to divining in the Yahwistic History, Gen. 30:27; 44:5,15, cf. e.g., J. Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville, 1992), 277-333.

[62] For the varied artificial images of the Canaanite in biblical traditions, cf. now R. L. Cohn, "Before Israel: The Canaanites as Other in Biblical Tradition" in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History*, ed. L. J. Silberstein and R. L. Cohn (New York, 1994), 74-90 and cf. the bibliography cited therein and add J. Van Seters, "The Terms 'Amorite' and 'Hittite' in the Old Testament," *VT* 22 (1972): 64-81, and *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven and London, 1975), 46-51.

Conclusion

The above traditio-historical analysis indicates that the viewpoint reflected in Deuteronomy 18 was only one of several perspectives articulated in biblical tradition, and that, according to other biblical traditions, both magic and divination were once vital features of ancient Israelite religious ritual. The list in Deuteronomy 18 comprises a conflation of late, but pre-existing, inventories of illicit ritual. Nevertheless, some of these rites are portrayed in earlier traditions of the Hebrew Bible as legitimate religion in Israelite society. This is so in spite of the fact that the same rites are depicted as those observed in neighboring cultures. The dtr "Canaanizing" of the various rituals or performers listed is clearly a rhetorical strategy designed to polemicize against formerly acceptable cults now competing with the contemporary dtr brand of Yahwism.

Deuteronomy 18's taxonomy of taboo has its parallel in the in other classification systems of control such as professions lists, demonological catalogues, and pollution inventories.[63] Indications are that within the socio-historical realities of Near Eastern cultures—including that of ancient Israel—, ritual specialists, like other workers, were often classified according to skills and services performed. Specialists of the regular cults and annual festivals and those of problem-oriented or crisis rituals were differentiated. By problem solving ritualists, I refer to those who performed such techniques as exorcism or the frightening away of a demon, propitiation or the buying off a demon, and the transfer or the sending of a demon elsewhere.

Despite these functional distinctions and labels, the comparative evidence demonstrates that those specialists overseeing both the crisis oriented rituals and the regular ritual complexes shared the same belief systems, served the same gods, received the same education, and regarded each other as legitimate practitioners. The writer of Deuteronomy 18 might have utilized such a professions list when he located the ritual specialists of 18:9-14 in close proximity to other practitioners such as the king (17:14-20), the levitical priest (18:1-8), and the prophet (18:15-22). However, a demarcation at this level can not adequately account for the ideological polemic uniquely aimed at the ritual specialists listed in 18:9-14. Skill specialization alone did not

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[63] On the interpretation of biblical taxonomies as mechanisms of social control, cf. the ongoing dialogue between J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, Anchor Bible 3 (New York, 1991), esp. 664-67, 718-36 and M. Douglas, "Atonement in Leviticus," *JSQ* 1 (1993/94): 109-30.

provide the basis for the biblical polemic against those professions listed in 18:9-14.

Another classificatory scheme documented across ancient Near Eastern cultures is that made between harmful magic or sorcery and defensive magic. But here the deciding criterion for the distinction between harmful and defensive magic is the concern for social cohesion, not one's professional skill or service. A similar categorization scheme is found in demonological catalogues. In these, numina are classified according to whether or not they acted malevolently or benevolently toward the living, whether they strengthened the status quo social structures or they eroded them. These catalogues could function as pollution inventories.

Zoological, polymorphic, meteorological, astrological, anatomical, topological, and behavioral criteria were used in classifying the demonic. Wiggerman has identified a dominate strategy in first millennium Mesopotamian demonology that entails a combinatory logic resulting in a polymorphic scheme. A given quality represented by an animal was abstracted, creating an awe-inspiring exemplary member of that animal group. This in turn was combined with various human attributes in order to make that force or power an imaginary one. This served to distinguish that animal-human member from the individual ordinary member. In other words, zoological and anthropomorphic elements were combined to create a demon. Eventually those demons who were defeated in cosmic battle by the anthropomorphic gods of the pantheon in Assyro-Babylonian theology became beneficent protective spirits.[64]

A corresponding differentiation among numina based on their perceived powers to affect the living might ultimately underlie the dtr

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[64] Cf. F. A. M. Wiggerman, *Mesopotamian Protective Spirits: The Ritual Texts* (Groningen, 1992), 143-64. However, A. Green, "Beneficent Spirits and Malevolent Demons: The Iconography of Good and Evil in Ancient Assyria and Babylonia," *Visible Religion* 3 (1984): 80-105 added that the difference between demons and monsters or protective spirits depended more upon their function in a given period than on any essential character trait attached to them, cf. also L. Schiffman and M. Swartz, *Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Sheffield, 1992), 35; Wiggerman, *Protective Spirits,* 143-64. Wiggerman, *Protective Spirits,* 164 notes that monsters were a class distinct from the gods, demons, and ghosts of the dead, or *eṭemmū*. They appear only sporadically with the divine determinative or the horns of divinity in art, they do not appear in diagnostic omens and no incantations exist against them. He sees a similar distinction at the level of function between demons and monsters or protective spirits. Monsters assisted the gods and although they unpredictably might wreak violent death and destruction, they were never the cause of diseases like the demons.

antithesis between Canaanite magic and Israelite religion. Perhaps it was along such a dividing line that dtr writers categorized rituals as legitimate or illegitimate, the crucial issue being the deity or numen who participated. In other words, a concern for social cohesion as invisioned by the biblical writers might have informed their taxonomy of taboo. It should be pointed out, however, that dtr and, for that matter, other biblical traditions generally avoided the mention of the numen underlying a specific ritual that was classified as an abomination. The identity of the specific numen was not made the explicit basis for deciding the question of a ritual's legitimacy. The classification was decided instead on the basis of whether a ritual was compatible with a specific brand of Yahwism. If a ritual was acceptable, then it was classified as an Israelite religious rite. If not, then it was characterized or categorized as having Canaanite origins. This is clearly the case with the legal traditions, and only rarely do the narrative or prophetic contexts offer exceptions. When a ritual complex was explicitly associated with a supernatural power, it is typically a generic (and somewhat artificially construed) "foreign" deity like Baal or Asherah that is mentioned.

Its more likely the case that the dtr traditions opted for a variation on the demonological taxonomy. The location of the various ritual practices in Deuteronomy 18 in the land of Canaan more closely approximates the kind of demonological topology attested, for example, in Egypt of the Late Period. In Egypt, all things associated with the liminal world of the frontier or periphery were demonized.[65] As mentioned above, the dtr rhetorical strategy entailed a secondary alteration of the distant foreign attachments of the practices listed so as to include in Deut. 18:10b-12a the local, non-Israelite, populations. These peoples, labelled the Canaanites, in turn came to symbolize pre-exilic antagonisms in the land. But in line with the biblical *Tendenz* to avoid the explicit mention of demons by name, our author implemented a rhetorical strategy in which those competing supernatural forces typically organized in other traditions by the classification of their personification as demons have been organized instead according to the corresponding ritual practitioner.[66]

At this juncture it might be relevant to point out that in Mesopotamia some monsters—and we would add demons—might have de-

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[65] For Late Period Egypt, cf. e.g., D. Meeks, "Génies, anges démons, en 'Egypte," *Génies, anges et démons* (Paris, 1971), 25-26.

[66] Note the repeated use of the participle forms to denote the corresponding professions: *maʿăbîr bĕnô-ûbittô bāʾēš*, *qōsēm qᵉsāmîm*, *mĕʿônēn*, *mĕnaḥēš*, *mĕkaššēp*, *ḥōbēr ḥābēr*, and *šōʾel ʾôb wĕyiddĕʿōnî*, and *dōrēš ʾel-hammētîm*.

rived their form from the cultic or ritual setting where priests and ritual professionals dressed in animal-human hybrid form.[67] Perhaps in Deut. 18:10b-12a, the dtr hand implemented a rhetoric of reversal in which the ritual professionals are substituted for their demonic protagonists which, as we pointed out, would be consistent with the dtr suppression of the demonic world. The fact that the ghosts of the dead are explicitly mentioned in 18:11 and are not other demons and monsters might suggest that the concurrent classification systems of demons and monsters—assuming that such existed in ancient Israelite society—did not include the ghosts of the dead. This in turn supports the notion that the eventual transformation of the Israelite dead from frail shades into supernaturally powerful beneficent ghosts under late Mesopotanian influence, was in no way an indicator of their potential to do harm or the even later re-characterization of the dead as demons.[68]

In the final analysis, the construction of such a list exposes the re-contextualized nature of Canaanite magic and divination in the Hebrew Bible. Biblical writers rhetorically categorized non-conforming rites as foreign—usually, "Canaanite"—in origin and then had them condemned by such culture heroes of the past as prophets, priests, and kings, but especially, the nation's founding leader, Moses. By "Canaanizing" rival ritual complexes from the indigenous culture, by projecting them back into hoary antiquity, and by having Moses, the prophet par excellence, condemn them as foreign abominations, the biblical rhetoric of self-identity marginalized competing ideologies. Thus, unlike the magic of artifact and inscription, magic in the Hebrew Bible has far less to say about the phenomenology of magic in ancient Israelite society and far more to tell about its function as a category of control in matters of purity and pollution. Nevertheless, when the results of a study like this on the subject of magic as a rhetorical or ideological tool in the Hebrew Bible is brought alongside an investigation of magic as ritual in ancient Levantine archaeology and inscription, an evaluation of the evidence as a whole indicates that magic and divination were fundamental religious elements of ancient Israelite society, not marginalized syncretistic rituals.

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[67] Cf. Wiggerman, *Protective Spirits*, 148-49.

[68] For further discussion of the character of the dead in Late Bronze and Iron age ancient Mediterranean West Asian traditions, see my *Israel's Beneficent Dead*.

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PART FOUR

JUDAISM

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SECRECY AND MAGIC, PUBLICITY AND TORAH: UNPACKING A TALMUDIC TALE

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Magic and Liturgy

Stanley Tambiah asserts that the "quintessential form" of magic, its determinative definition which he traces to "the early Judaic legacy that has coloured subsequent Western thought" defines it as "automatically effective" and as possessing "an intrinsic and automatic efficacy."[1] Such a definition misunderstands the complexity of the concept of magic. Scholars since Tambiah, such as Catherine Bell, have carefully delineated the variety of ways in which ritual works as magic. They suggest that the definitive differentiation between magic and religion, long associated with the "Judaic legacy" is far more ambivalent than might be expected. The distinction between magic and other types of ritual appears "a hindrance to objective analysis" and "closely tied to historical biases." Worship and magic do not seem separate entities, but rather parts of a single whole.[2] They work together within a social setting, sometimes supporting the status quo, sometimes challenging it, but coordinated in their attitudes, approaches, and concerns. Witchcraft and sorcery are not as far removed from traditional religious actions as might be expected.[3] Magic and liturgy overlap so closely that many religious traditions find it necessary to create a distinction between them. Since legitimate prayer often serves to reinforce the values and basic self-understanding of a group, a religious community often takes pains to demarcate the difference between "true" liturgical practice and illegitimate rituals which are considered as "magic." By discovering how

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[1] Stanley Jeyaraja Tambiah, *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 7.

[2] See, for example, not only the title, but also the articles in Jacob Neusner, Ernst Frerichs, and Paul Flesher, eds., *Religion, Science and Magic: In Concert* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[3] See Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspective and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 52. See the discussion on pp. 46-52 where Bell summarizes the developing consciousness among scholars of religion which, conditioned by a sensitivity to linguistic analysis, led to a rethinking of the category of magic.

a particular group understands magic, the investigator discovers as well, by contrast, how members of that group understand themselves and their identity. Learning what a group considers dangerous about magic, uncovering the perversion it attributes to magic, also reveals the positive self-image a group seeks to create. This study seeks to follow that insight. It looks at a rejection of magic discussed in the Talmudic tractate Sanhedrin and then seeks to evoke the type of Judaism contrasted with magic. It focuses in particular on the ideas of Rabbi Aqiva ben Yosef (whose dates are approximately 50-132 c.e.) whose approach to magic dominates the Talmudic approach and whose close association with magic in Judaism needs investigation. That investigation takes on special meaning when applied to one version of the story of Aqiva's martyrdom.

This study has particular relevance because that "early Judaic legacy" of which Tambiah speaks is no less ambiguous about magic than any other tradition. The early practitioners of Judaism, the rabbinic leaders, employed a type of ritualism that itself was thought to be automatic and effective. Use of divine names, for example, enabled a skilled religious leader to control angelic forces and powers.[4] Rabbis created living entities out of clay, cursed their enemies, blessed their supporters, and manifested supernatural powers. Yet while they did so, they tried to resolve the ambiguity by stressing that what they were doing could not fall under the proscribed practice of "magic." As Michael D. Swartz points out, the rabbis needed to justify their practices both to themselves and others. Since the Hebrew Bible forbids magic and since the Roman government regarded such rituals as potentially subversive and revolutionary, the rabbis required a way of claiming that their actions did not qualify as "magic." Swartz remarks that they "are in continual need to validate their practices by showing that their power derives from God and is sanctioned by those most in communication with him."[5]

Swartz, in a more extended discussion, notes that magic is ambiguous in many ways. Not only is its nature unclear, but its relationship to the historical and social context is also variable. The twin claims of exclusive knowledge and the availability of that knowledge, the double-edged power of magic both to support and to undermine the social structure, and the interplay of purity and impurity in the rituals

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[4] See Rebecca Lesses, "The Adjuration of the Prince of the Presence: Performative Utterance in a Jewish Ritual," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, eds. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 185-206.

[5] Michael D. Swartz, "Magical Piety in Ancient and Medieval Judaism," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 183.

associated with it show the complexity of the theurgic and liturgical process in rabbinic times. Swartz uncovers "a deep ambivalence toward rabbinic notions of Torah, tradition and purity" that while clearly present in "mystical" ritual also penetrates into the "official" practice of Jewish leaders.[6] This internal struggle within Jewish sources makes the discovery of the criteria used an important effort.

That discovery will not reveal what magic "really" is. The present study looks at rabbinic self-presentation. It does not ask whether the way the rabbis justify and validate their practices "actually" succeeds in its intent. What is undeniable, however, is that rabbinic sources do acknowledge the difficulty and problem of differentiating their practice from magical activity. The talmudic discussion of Deuteronomy 18 in Babylonian Talmud Tractate Sanhedrin 65aff. discusses these issues. The Mishnah codifies the biblical laws in Deuteronomy 18 and the penalties associated with them. Talmudic rabbis do not dispute the effectiveness of magic. There is much they debate about the intricacies of magical procedure but they do not doubt either its power or its association with Jewish religion. Rabbi Aqiva ben Yosef is in debate with Tinneius Rufus concerning the sanctity of the Sabbath; he proves his case by three examples—the River Sambaton which ceases churning on the Sabbath, the way a skull used for conjuring behaves on the Sabbath, and by the fact that Tinneius Rufus' father's grave does not smoke with the fires of Hell on that day (Sanhedrin 65b). All three proofs are equally valid—from Jewish tradition, from prohibited magic, and from Jewish folk lore about Hell. The rabbinic magic derived from observing the Torah is justified by an appeal to the River Sambaton. Yet that appeal is bolstered by reference of conjuring and to consulting the dead. These last two practices were eschewed by the rabbis, but they still needed to show that their powers not only equaled but surpassed those of pagan conjurers and necromancers. The rabbis had two very different tasks before them—they needed to prove their prowess in magic while nonetheless justifying their claims to be normative and "orthodox."

Aqiva and Magic

Throughout this discussion, Rabbi Aqiva seems to take pride of place. He notes the various techniques magicians have to use and wonders that one would go through all this just to consult an impure spirit. How much more, he thinks, would people go through to have re-

[6] Michael D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 217.

course to the Holy spirit. Examples of the power from that source follow—rabbis can create an artificial human life, they create a calf to eat, they can conjure wild animals. Yet other examples follow as well, examples from magicians. Practitioners of the forbidden magic perform similar supernatural actions. The proximity of examples of forbidden magic and the capability of the rabbis underlines the common power that both share. While, of course, the rabbis understand themselves as guardians of the tradition, and therefore cannot, by definition, be magicians, their self-justification is meant to convince the skeptical, not just to convince themselves. The rabbis are in dialogue with non-Jewish Roman leaders and with Hellenized Jews. Self-serving as their discussion of magic might be, it is not self-evident. How they choose to justify their practices reflects their own self-image.

Rabbinic discussions do not settle on any single line of defense. A later discussion (Sanhedrin 67a-68a) seeks to define exactly what constitutes witchcraft and magic and what does not. A distinction is made between those who merely provide the illusion of sorcery and those who actually perform it. Again, Rabbi Aqiva provides a striking example of this. He raises the case of two men both of whom appear to be gathering cucumbers by magic. He then claims that the one who really gathers them is guilty. The one who makes an illusion and only appears to be gathering them is exempt from the penalties. That example seems to imply that "magic" works while "illusion" is permissible. In fact, other scholars also augment this argument. They tell of how rabbis punished Jews who treated them with disrespect by changing their appearance. One woman, for example, was forced to bear the shape of a donkey until the rabbinic spell wore off. Yet other examples suggest that even a ritual that "works" need not be considered "magic" if it is carried out for the right reasons. The Talmud advances the argument of the fourth century Babylonian sage Abaye who compared the laws of sorcery to those of the Sabbath. Just as some sabbatical prohibitions come with specific punishments assigned to them and others while forbidden are not punished, and still others are not even forbidden, so it is with magic. Some types of magic, he claims, are clearly proscribed. Others, however, are just as clearly permitted.. As an example of sorcery that is not forbidden, Abaye refers to a case in which two rabbis created a calf so they could have a Sabbath feast. Here there is no question that the magic was only illusion. The rabbis enjoyed the products of their magical performance to enhance the holiday observance. What is at stake in making the act forbidden or permitted seems to be not whether actual results occur, but whether the intention is for the sake of a divine commandment or not. Pursuing what might appear to be magic as a means to

fulfilling God's injunction to honor the Sabbath falls under those activities which are not proscribed.

That case suggests three important points. The first is that magic derives from a true knowledge, a knowledge that is not merely superstition and illusion. The second is that the knowledge is not alien to Judaism. It is close to Jewish teachings and related to them. Finally, it suggests that what is at stake in magic is a misuse of an appropriate power. The intention of the act rather than the act itself is what counts. Rabbi Aqiva alludes to these two points when he justifies giving the death penalty for the practice of magic. Aqiva is well known for opposing capital punishment. When the rabbis discussed what constituted a "blood thirsty" court with some saying one that issues an execution once in seven years and another saying one that issues one once in seventy years, he joined Rabbi Tarfon in claiming that "If we were members of the Sanhedrin no man would ever be executed" (Makkot 7a). Yet, in this case he supports the use of the death penalty. Why should he?

Aqiva supports his contention by means of a biblical verse, Exodus 19:12-13: "Any who touch the mountain shall be put to death. No hand shall touch them, but they shall be stoned or shot with arrows." According to Aqiva the penalty for touching the mountain is the same as the penalty for practicing magic. In both cases a person unprepared for the influx of divine power takes hold of something that ultimately destroys him. Magic, on this reading, entails an assertion of power without the preliminary restraints required to neutralize its destructive force. Of course magic has power, of course Jews have access to that power, but to intend to wrest that power from its protective limits, to overstep the boundaries separating it from daily life, shows a lack of understanding of the very nature of human weakness. Death flows from the misappropriation of power not because the rabbis impose a death-penalty, but because the power itself is dangerous.

Emannuel Levinas discusses this argument and suggests that Aqiva is making another point about magic as well as about its inherently destructive power. Levinas suggests that what Aqiva has in mind is a comparison between the lack of preparation which would have left the Israelites dead at Sinai to the lack of intellectual probity in the magician which leaves him as good as dead. The death-penalty is not just for the use of magic. It is for the use of magic by someone who should know better! Levinas comments that this is to show that sorcery is not "a pagan perversion. It is a perversion of the holy people itself." Magic is the misuse of that knowledge which is distinctively Judaic and "which tempts from the very depths of the truth, a Jewish

perversion..."[7] Aqiva does not believe that magic lies outside of the Judaic framework. It has its origin within Judaism itself. It represents a particular distortion of what is truly and most distinctively Judaic. Studying how Aqiva understands the distinctiveness of Judaic magic also reveals his view of the distinctiveness of Jewish prayer.

His view is not merely that magic is effective and illusion is not. He often concedes, with Abaye, that an effective incantation may, in fact, be acceptable. When Aqiva speaks of magic he often emphasizes its secrecy rather than its efficacy. Use of supernatural powers, if carried out for the public purpose of learning and studying is not "magic." His example of someone who gathers cucumbers illustrates this point. One might think that any occasion on which anyone practices such a spell would constitute performing a forbidden activity. Creating and destroying cucumbers is a far cry from effecting an illusion of making a woman look like a donkey! Aqiva, himself, however, actually participated in such an event. The Talmud tells how he learned the technique of creating and destroying cucumbers as part of his studies with Rabbi Eliezer the Great. Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus complained that none of his disciples learned everything he could teach. He attests, in this complaint, that only Aqiva was able to learn from him the magical words for creating and destroying cucumbers. Aqiva is said to have been passing through a field with Rabbi Eliezer and asked him about the incantation. The rabbi taught him the power of causing cucumbers to sprout up in a field. Aqiva then demanded the spell to cause them to wither and die and proceeded to learn it.

Aqiva's actions, cannot, by definition, be considered "magic," since he is an established hero of the tradition. How can the tradition, however, explain his actions? Several possible reasons present themselves, but the simplest one focuses on Aqiva's intention. He learned the skill so as to be able to teach it to others. He learned this magic as a form of knowledge. To learn it as part of a public curriculum of education is permitted; to use it as part of a secret and exclusive horde of special talent is forbidden. Aqiva is indeed possessed of the knowledge of sorcery and witchcraft. He does, indeed, surrender to the temptation for knowledge of which he speaks. Yet his knowledge is of the "pure" spirit rather than the "impure" because he shares it, because it is broadcast abroad for all to learn. Does this mean that Aqiva "really" would never whisper an incantation, that no magician ever performed actions by the light of day, that the distinction be-

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[7] Emmanuel Levinas, "Desacralization and Disenchantment," in his *Nine Talmudic Readings*. Annette Aronowicz, trans. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 145.

tween public and private use of skills has a correspondence in historical practice? Probably not. The text introduces this theme to point to a general lesson. It celebrates the public practice of supernatural skills as a way of emphasizing the civil importance, the social location, of the rabbinic leader. This emphasis on civil visibility, however, is an important value that reveals a significant aspect of rabbinic self-understanding.

This principle of public dissemination of knowledge runs like a central theme in Aqiva's teachings. He claims that among those excluded from the World to Come are those who whisper Exodus 15:16 (God's promise that Jews will not suffer the diseases of Egypt) over a wound (Sanhedrin 10.1). Again, Aqiva himself may well have quietly chanted this incantation. The point is not so much whether "magicians" really whisper and non-magicians really speak aloud. The point of the story is whether a leader seeks to keep skills within a select circle of adapts or rather works to make it common knowledge. No one disputes that Exodus 15:16 has the power to heal wounds. That this powerful incantation should be kept as part of a secret knowledge is something that the tradition contends Aqiva sought to end. This commitment to making the secret public manifests itself in other stories about Aqiva. He objects to those who would keep knowledge covered. Several stories tell of him revealing things that the Torah sees fit to hide—that Zelophad was the sinner in the wilderness, that Aaron was another unnamed sinner, and the Bilaam is none oher than the Elihu of Job (Shabbat 97a and Jerusalem Talmud Sota 5). In these cases, Aqiva is clearly a champion of the public declaration of knowledge. That seems to be the contrast he draws between magic and normative Jewish practice. Whereas magic is whispered and clandestine, Judaism reveals the hidden and unmasks the concealed. Aqiva distinguishes magic and religion by emphasizing the public nature of the latter.

Evidence From Aqiva's Martyrdom

The centrality of Aqiva in this discussion of magic is no mere coincidence. He gives his name to the entire period in which he lived. Judah Nadich's study of Tinneius Rufus and the Jews under Roman rule is not unusual to take as its title "Rabbi Akiva and His Contemporaries," and to give the story of Aqiva pride of place in his investigation.[8] In rabbinic and medieval documents, Aqiva dominates

[8] See as representative studies in English and Judah Nadich, *Rabbi Akiba and His Contemporaries* (Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1998), 1-111.

Jewish thinking. Louis Finkelstein, whose monograph on Aqiva has long been a classic, places the sage in company of Moses, Isaiah, Maimonides, and Spinoza. He argues that Aqiva "dominates the whole scene of Jewish history for eighteen centuries" and continues to have enduring relevance.[9] Not only the story of his death (in 132, and most probably connected with the Bar Kochba rebellion that erupted in that year), but legends of miracles after it augment Aqiva's stature. After his death, according to *Midrash Proverbs* 9, Elijah the prophet announced his death to Rabbi Joshua ha-Garsi. He conducted the rabbi to Aqiva's prison cell, lifted up the body and gave it to the rabbi. Rabbi Joshua was skeptical. Elijah, as a priest, would become "unclean" by touching such a body. He voiced his concerns to Elijah who replied "there is no ritual impurity attached to the righteous." Aqiva's sanctity overrides the general prohibitions given for priestly purity. His story provides an ideal of holiness for all who follow. Even Elijah cannot be polluted by the dead body of Aqiva. Thus Aqiva's prestige lends an important legitimation to any Judaic endeavor. Not surprisingly, then, many early mystical texts portray themselves as written by Aqiva. He speaks in the first person singular in this texts, performs wonders, and reveals secrets of magical import.[10] Aqiva the magician legitimates later Jewish magic users by the stature of his reputation.

This special status of Aqiva draws strength from, but also reinforces, his importance as a hero in Jewish martyrology. Aqiva, according to tradition, came to a terrible end at the hands of Tinneius Rufus during a time when the Romans proscribed the study of the Torah and its commentaries (as noted above, many scholars see a connection between Aqiva's death, Rufus' actions, and the Bar Kochba rebellion against Hadrian). The tale of this martyrdom has been reported in several variants. Most versions attribute to him a protest against the Romans and portray a final confrontation with his tormentors. Yet these versions, despite containing similar elements, differ dramatically in their portrait of Aqiva as a rabbi and as a magician. The various themes about Aqiva's approach to magic and to Judaism as public knowledge combine in these stories about his death at the hands of the Romans.

Many scholars note that this story in its different variations represents an attempt to grapple with theodicy, with the suffering that

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[9] Louis Finkelstein, *Akiba: Scholar, Saint and Martyr* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1936) , 1.

[10]. Gershom G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1965), 28

comes precisely to those who serve God the most selflessly and piously.[11] Michael Fishbane contends that the Jerusalem Talmud's version is the most historically plausible, because it represents Aqiva issuing a challenge to the putative legality of the proceedings. Aqiva's exchange with Rufus represents a "plausible sequence of events and motivations" as a "flagrant act of resistance to the pagan authorities." Viewing the different versions from this perspective, Fishbane can argue that those variants emphasizing a devotion and cleaving to God as an act of "theurgical" perfection are only of a later derivation.[12] Whether or not this judgment of the history of the textual tradition holds true, the different variants deserve to be read together as a complex whole. Certainly the version of Aqiva's death in the Jerusalem Talmud has striking elements that do not occur in other versions (including what is crucial here, a reference to Aqiva as a magician). Yet the rabbinic claim that Aqiva is not a magician requires a study of all the variants and their inner connection to one another. This analysis does not seek to show what Aqiva *really* said or if he *actually* practiced "magic." Instead, it looks at the picture provided by the rabbis through a variety of versions of Aqiva's martyrdom and elicits from them a *rabbinic* judgment on what constitutes and does not constitute magic.

The story given in the Jerusalem Talmud raises several significant issues. It provides an important insight into the place of magic in the tales about Aqiva, weaving together the strands already noted. Three themes predominate: the public setting of the event, the charge that Aqiva is a magician, and the psychological response Aqiva provides justifying his actions. Each of these illuminates Aqiva's view about magic The setting for the discussion of Aqiva the magician in the Jerusalem Talmud is a dialogue between the Jewish leader and the Roman who persecutes him. Aqiva, condemned as a Jewish rebel, an

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[11] See the discussions in Herbert Basser, *In the Margins of the Midrash: Sifre Ha'azinu Texts, Commentaries, and Reflections* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 52; Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 117-129; Michael Fishbane, *The Kiss of God: Spiritual and Mystical Death in Judaism*, The Samuel and Althea Stroum Lectures in Jewish Studies. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 66-73; Ephraim E. Urbach, "Ascesis and Suffering in the System of the Sages," [Hebrew] in Salo Baron, ed., *Yitzhak F. Baer Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (Jerusalem: The Israeli Historical Society, 1960), 48-68. Strangely enough, Steven D. Fraade relegates this discussion to a footnote concerning "Israel's Sufferings" and does not introduce either Aqiva's interpretation of the *ema* even when presenting the Sifre's interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:4-7. See his *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and Its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), 91, 213, 240, 241, 242.

[12] Fishbane, *Kiss of God*, 68 82.

adversary of Roman rule in Judea, is taken before Rufus who watches him being tortured to death. The time for the recitation of the *ema* arrives and Aqiva recites the prayer and smiles. Rufus looks at him in wonder and asks, "Are you a magician or are you insensitive to pain that you smile during this torture?" The context of the dialogue is that of a public discourse, of a debate between two thinkers in an open spirit of inquiry.

A second significant, but usually obscured aspect of the story, is the accusation that Aqiva is a magician. Not only did Jewish tradition reject magic, but the Romans as well delegated "theurgy" to dangerous and forbidden cults. Historically, Rufus might well have suspected something subversive in the rituals of the Jews. Rome often found much to worry about in cultic behavior that it could not control. Perhaps the messianic claims raised about Bar Kochba and his supernatural abilities led the Roman leader to suspect magical arts at play. Fishbane may be right that the charge of magical practice represents a historically plausible basis for Rufus' persecution of Aqiva. The Jerusalem Talmud, however, does not see its purpose as that of refuting the Roman charge concerning Jewish messianic magic. Instead, the passage seems focused on demystifying liturgical claims concerning the power and effect of Jewish worship. The narrative wants to justify those claims while proving that they are not "magic" even though the effects they promise may appear "magical." The Talmud does not deny that Jews in general and rabbis in particular do practice occult arts. Are these really magical acts? Can Jews perform them without abandoning their commitment to the God whom they profess? The author may well have used the charge against Aqiva as an opportunity to explore the difference between the occult powers achieved through the study of Torah and those gained through some other means. The tale of martyrdom becomes an object lesson on how Judaic magic may be used for licit purposes and thus go beyond the prohibition against the employment of magic.

The final striking element in the Jerusalem Talmud's tale lies in Aqiva's response. He provides a naturalistic explanation for his joy. According to the text, after Rufus' query, Aqiva points to himself and says "this person is granted a special pleasure," and explains that whenever he had previously read the verse requiring self-sacrifice for the sake of God, he had been saddened at the thought that he could not fulfil it. Now that the time for self-sacrifice and the time for reciting that verse coincided, he no longer felt the disturbance he had before. That explanation concludes the debate. Aqiva has provided a psychological justification for his act. He is not a magician but rather

he is a human being who has sublimated his physical needs to his spiritual ones. The act associated with the occult arts is, rather, a normal Jewish liturgical practice which indicates loyalty to the tradition rather than some special occult ability.

The text then concludes by noting that as soon as Aqiva finished making his statement he gave up his soul in death.[13] That phrase echoes stories about the death of Moses, also seen to have voluntarily given up life at God's command. That note suggests that Aqiva's death was as special as his life. Although apparently martyred by the Romans, he in fact, offers his life of his own free will to God. For such an act he receives a supernal reward, dying by a kiss of God. While Aqiva's mundane happiness comes out of liturgical obedience, the reward for the happiness is eternal bliss. This conjunction of liturgical pleasure and ultimate heavenly felicity suggests a reciprocal relationship between the two. The earthly joy of fulfilling the commandments provides a foretaste of the sublime and eternal joy of paradise.

The Charge that Aqiva is a Magician

Aqiva's association with magic cannot be denied. Several later magical texts claim to derive from him, the most famous being "The Alphabet of Rabbi Aqiva," and the magical "*Havdalah* of Rabbi Aqiva," mentioned by Gershom Scholem. Scholem also notes the magical elements included in "The Lesser Hekhalot," texts reporting travels in paradise but also associating several magical formulae with Rabbi Aqiva.[14] The contention that Aqiva practices supernatural arts must be taken seriously. Even in its choice of words, the Jerusalem Talmud's account makes the charge a serious one. The word used for magician in most printed texts is the normal Hebrew word found, for example, in Deuteronomy 18.10 (No one shall be found among you ...who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a *magician*), *mekhaef*. This is a central text for the discussion of magic in later rabbinic writing. It is, for example, in connection with this verse that the *Sifre* that Aqiva's tale about gathering cucumbers is originally told. It is also in conjunction with this verse that Aqiva's stance concerning illusions not being proscribed is challenged by the *sages* (a term usually referring to the consensus of rabbinic leaders) who identify the illu-

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[13] Jerusalem Talmud Berachot 9:14b
[14] Scholem, *Gnosticism*, 68, 77.

sionist with the "soothsayer."[15] What does this term mean? Sanhedrin 67b reports in the name of Rabbi Yohanan that it means "one who reduces the power of the divine." Commentators have tried to figure out how Rabbi Yohanan came to this conclusion. They argue that the magician seeks to control God. By so doing they are claiming that human beings have power over the divine. They are thus reducing the amount of sovereignty attributed to the divinity. If this is the meaning of the charge, then it hardly applies to Aqiva since his declaration of faith in the divine is precisely an affirmation of God's power.

In the earliest manuscripts of the Jerusalem Talmud, however, the word used by Rufus is a rarer term *ḥereš*, found in Onkelos, the Aramaic translation, for Deuteronomy 18.10 (who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a *user of secret spells*) and apparently also related to Isaiah 3:3 where among the leaders upon whom all depend are "the wisest of the *ḥarašim* and the cunning whisperers (magicians?)." The usual interpretation is that of someone who offers incantations secretly. Aqiva in the eyes of the rabbinic author might not have fallen into the trap of reducing divine power, but might have fallen prey to the temptation to retain an elitist hold on his knowledge. The term used ostensibly by Rufus indicates a type of secret knowledge, a whispered truth that is not available to everyone. The contrast between magic which is secretive and Judaism which is open explains the choice of a word which, while used in Aramaic for magician, also has a Hebrew association with mumbled incantations. Aqiva is charged not with violating Jewish theological values but with contradicting his own principle—that of public dissemination of knowledge. The danger that Aqiva poses to Judaism is not that of attempting to coerce the deity or to pretend that human beings can influence the divine plan. Rather the problem of magic for the Jews is just the one that Aqiva proposed as most pernicious, that of keeping certain information secret as a source of private power.

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[15]. *Sifre Deuteronomy*, *Pisqa*171; see in English, Reuven Hammer, *Sifre: A Tannaitic Commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 199-200, and Jacob Neusner, *Sifre to Deuteronomy: An Analytic Translation*. Volume 2 (Atlanta, BA: Scholars Press, 1987), 46-48. Neusner's presentation raises an interesting point. He separates the first and last part of the statement so that Aqiva only claims that "Two may collect cucumbers, one of whom is liable and the other of whom is exempt." The statement that the difference is that one creates an illusion and the other doesn't appears as a later expansion. Tempting as that separation might be, the fact that Aqiva disputes the other sages about the status of the illusionist as "soothsayer" leads me to think that the second part of the claim also belongs to him.

The text answers this charge by emphasizing the public, liturgical nature of what was performed. Aqiva does not whisper some secret formula. Instead he declares the most public proclamation in the Jewish liturgy, the *šema*. The liturgical nature of his utterance has crucial importance. Aqiva is reported as saying that one knows whether someone for whom you pray will improve or not by whether the words come easily or only with difficulty. Liturgy does have an effect on the world. One can indeed determine the course of events by the way the liturgy proceeds. But it is precisely the use of predetermined and public utterances that make this ability to forecast the future possible (Tosefta Berakhot 3:3). He makes a similar case in his argument with Rabbi Ishmael on the significance of the priestly benediction, the blessing described in Numbers 6:22-27, in which the priests place God's name on the people after which God blesses them. Aqiva insisted that the priests make the blessing, and that the divinity is forced to agree (Ḥullin 49a). Again human speech influences divine action. Liturgical pronouncements do indeed seem to change the state of things in the world. For Aqiva the question, however, is not that of forcing the divine hand. It is rather whether or not the act is public or secret. Because his action in the martydom scene involves the recitation of a liturgical pronouncement it cannot be confused with the whispered secrets of magic.

The Public Nature of Aqiva's Pronouncements

A second contributing aspect of the story in the Jerusalem Talmud lies in its public, civil setting of the event. Several talmudic stories recount the interaction of Rufus and Aqiva.[16] In fact, several of these also occur in the context of the tractate Sanhedrin in which the discussion of magic appears. To understand why Rufus is the protagonist here requires more than knowing his association with the Roman domination of Judea. Aqiva is doing more than just flagrantly interrupting a Roman judicial proceeding. He is carrying on a dialogue with the Roman official. The significance of this fact, of Aqiva's position as instructor to the Gentiles, becomes clear only when taken in relationship to the other stories about similar dialogues. What point does the author make about both martyrdom and the universal implication of Judaic teachings by evoking Aqiva's relationship with this Roman leader?

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[16] See, for example, the stories reported in Nadich, *Rabbi Akiba*, 39-41, 100-104.

Rufus is continually portrayed as having a knowledge of Jewish texts combined with a skepticism about their value. These questions may, as Richard Rubenstein has pointed out, reflect religious questions that the rabbis themselves felt. Rubenstein suggests that "Because of the perilous condition of the Jewish community after its defeat by Rome in 132-35, it was impossible for responsible leaders openly to express religious reservations in their own name." He continues, however, that they could express them "by placing them in the mouths of sinners."[17] Aqiva replies in such a way that Jews can reconcile themselves to doubts that they might never voice aloud. In one case (Baba Batra 10a), Rufus wonders if God can really "love the poor." If that is so, why should the poor suffer? Aqiva explains that the conditions of the poor provide an opportunity for Jews to escape the punishments of Hell. By aiding the impoverished, Jews earn themselves credit with God. Rufus objects, contending that since God imposed suffering on these people they must deserve it. If they deserve it, then it must anger God that others have ameliorated this condition. Aqiva replies that God's love of humanity is like a king's love for his children and that a king will reward those who help a prince, even if he is in disgrace. Rufus reacts by claiming that, "When you do God's will you are God's children but if not you are God's servants." That idea is one found not only on the lips of this Roman but from rabbinic masters as well. Aqiva's final remark both confirms and rejects Rufus' view: Yes, Jews are not now doing God's will, but that will is precisely to help the poor and needy. Here Aqiva turns the argument against helping the poor into its opposite—an injunction to help them.

A similar debate focuses on the Jewish practice of circumcision (Tanhuma Tazria 4-5). Rufus wonders whether human or divine actions are more attractive. Aqiva sagely answers that human deeds are. Bread, for example, is more attractive and edible than wheat as it grows in the field. Nature needs human improvement to be useful. In this way, Aqiva can claim that circumcision is a necessary improvement on nature. The illustration continues, however, with Aqiva noting that everyone agrees that a newborn's umbilical cord must be cut upon birth. Not only circumcision, but ordinary birthing transforms nature for the sake of human existence. Aqiva concludes by suggesting that circumcision, which after all is one step beyond that of cutting the umbilical cord, is given for the special refinement of the

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[17] Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Religious Imagination: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Jewish Theology* (Boston: Beacon, 1968), 30-31.

Jewish people. Here again a doubt that could grow within Jewish minds appears as a statement from the "wicked" Rufus. Again Aqiva gives a response that is not really aimed at non-Jews but at the Jews themselves.

This public context of Aqiva's debate on martyrdom reflects a transition occurring within Jewish practice. The stories reflect a time when the idea of sanctifying God's name had changed from being a general exaltation of the divine through following Jewish laws to being a specific act of self-sacrifice for the sake of those laws. The ideal of martyrdom is found in several early texts, but the model of the Hasmonean period sought to circumscribe that ideal. For the Hasmoneans, martyrs refuse to violate their religious commitments, defy the oppressors, and then are put to death. Martyrdom is the consequence of an activist stance against what is perceived as abusive political power. The period in which the Aqiva stories developed saw an active seeking of martyrdom as a type of spiritual fulfillment. To become a martyr was to realize a religious ideal.[18] Many who still retained the older paradigm would question such an exaltation of martyrdom. The use of liturgy to induce a state of transcendent ecstasy seemed magical and illegitimate. Rufus once again articulates a doubt that many Jews could share. He wonders whether these heroic martyrs are really exponents of an authentic Judaism or whether they practice some alien type of sorcery. Aqiva's emphasis on the liturgical formula which legitimates active martyrdom answers that doubt. Not only political or historical necessity create the conditions under which one becomes a martyr. Twice each day this ideal of dying for the sake of God takes shape in Jewish prayer. Martyrdom, despite the doubts placed in the mouth of the sinner Rufus, has a legitimate and authentic place within Jewish life and thought by virtue of its presence as an always possible alternative in liturgical recitations.

The significance of this liturgical lesson within the context of public debate needs comment. In other versions of the Aqiva lesson his students ask him why he smiles, and his exegesis is meant for a small body of elite initiates. The Jerusalem Talmud's version, however, suggests that Aqiva's liturgical lesson is meant for all human beings. The psychology involved applies not just to Jews but to all people. To love God fully with one's heart, and mind, and life enables any person to rise above the trials and torments of human suffering. Again and again in the dialogues with Rufus, Aqiva resorts to universal examples, to analogies that anyone can understand. The difference

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[18] See Boyarin, *Intertextuality*, 126 and Fishbane, *Kiss of God*, 60.

between magic and liturgy is nowhere clearer than in Aqiva's confidence that Rufus can comprehend the explanation that he gives. Any person who recognizes the relationship between loyalty to an obligation and the joy of fulfilling it can understand the power that gave Aqiva the ability to laugh in the face of torture. The *šema* may be a particularistic Jewish prayer. Its liturgical power to lead people to a transcendence of ordinary and even extraordinary disaster and suffering is universal. Jewish practice of this liturgy points the way for others, for non-Jews, to understand the significance of ritual, of loyalty, and of the benefits that come from fulfilling one's obligations.

Aqiva and the Rewards of Martyrdom and Liturgical Recitations

The mention of benefits from liturgical performance suggests an important dimension lacking in this version of the Aqiva myth. Other versions include either a heavenly voice or the divine itself declaring that through his suffering Aqiva becomes worthy of everlasting life, of entrance into the world to come. In contrast to this other-worldly emphasis, the Jerusalem Talmud stresses the joy that Aqiva experiences here and now. He gladly gives up his life because by so doing he experiences an intense pleasure; he does not deny himself earthly joy but rather heightens his enjoyment through engendering an ecstatic feeling. This attribution of mundane happiness to Aqiva represents a significant variation on the usual ways rabbinic literature presents him. One only needs to look at other stories about Aqiva to realize how extraordinary this attribution is. Aqiva is traditionally associated with rabbinic narratives of ascent to heaven. In one of the most widely cited passages, four sages ascend into the divine palaces and only Aqiva enters and leaves in peace (Hagiga 14b). That anecdote won for Aqiva a high place in Jewish mystical thinking, especially concerning ascent to heaven. Several texts claim to describe rabbinic heroes who visit the heavenly palaces. These heroes negotiate difficult passage through the upper realms of God's chambers. Joseph Dan suggests that the original hero in all such tales was Aqiva. Only later were the names of other rabbis added to the illustrious list of those who could ascend.[19] Yet despite this association with heavenly ascent, entrance into the divine realm plays no role in the Jerusalem Talmud's version of Aqiva's death. The reluctance to mention such ascent may have to do with the esoteric liturgical knowledge

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[19] Joseph Dan, *On Sanctity: Religion, Ethics and Mysticism in Judaism and Other Religions* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997), 191.

associated with the literature concerning visits to the heavenly realms. Gershom Scholem points out that an important aspect of such visits included listening to the liturgy of the angels. Prayers very similar to those used in the traditional liturgy are revealed as the special property of the divine court. In some of the accounts the mysterious hymns are placed in the mouth of none other than Aqiva. He becomes the vehicle by which a secret ritual is transmitted from the heavenly realm to the earthly realm.[20]

That is what this text from the Jerusalem Talmud denies. Aqiva is giving an object lesson on how ascent to God comes through the public performance of a generally human act—the act of love. Not only were heavenly ascents associated with Aqiva, but also an exaltation of the biblical book Song of Songs. That book is an explicit celebration of sexual eros. It portrays male and female sexuality vividly and positively. Naturally, some authorities sought to repress it and control its erotic power. It is said that when Song of Songs was about to be excluded from the biblical canon, Aqiva defended it. His allegorical interpretation of it linked his name with its sanctity in Jewish thought.[21] Aqiva honored and respected love. Even sexuality was honored. It is told that he inherited a teaching whispered to him by his teacher, Nahum of Gamzu, that one who has had a seminal emission and had only nine kabs of water sprinkled on him is considered purified. Why was this transmitted in a whisper? Different reasons are suggested. One is that Aqiva wanted to respect both the ideal of procreation and that of Torah study. The point, however, is not the whisper but the transmission of the teaching. Sexual activity is not as seriously polluting as some might think. Aqiva seeks to elevate eros and love, to give it an exalted place in human affairs. Thus he supports the canonization of the Song of Songs.

Yet for Aqiva the Song of Songs is more than just a public celebration of sexuality. He interprets the work allegorically as a dialogue between the Nations of the World and Israel. Israel teaches all the world how to love God through the lessons conveyed in this work. As Judah Goldin says, "Face to face with the Nations of the World, Aqiba teaches Israel what he knows about love, and insists that to be united with the God of Israel, the Nations must love Him as Israel

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[20] Scholem, *Gnosticism*, 28.

[21] Ibid., 83ff.; see also Judah Goldin, "Toward a Profile of the Tanna, Aqiba ben Joseph," in his *Studies in Midrash and Related Literature*, Barry L. Eichler and Jeffrey H. Tigay, eds. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988), 299-323.

loves Him, Him only."[22] The task of the Jew is to convince the entire world of the meaning of true love. That is the superlative purpose of Jewish existence. If that is the case, what greater lesson can there be than that the reward of loving God comes in the here and now. Aqiva in the Jerusalem Talmud's version does not escape from this world into the next because such escapism is not love but only evasion. According to Judah Goldin, Aqiva's view derives from his conviction that true love must be steadfast, loyal, and never changing. Such a love is tried and tested in the experiences of life, not in a spiritual realm of perfection.[23] The public witness of Aqiva's death shows what such love means when applied to a divine being. No human situation can dissuade Aqiva from obedience to God because his love is unwavering. Again the public situation is important, but this time as a lesson about what love of God entails—not a hope for some delayed reward but a passion that makes everything else in life irrelevant and unimportant.

Aqiva's loving surrender of his life becomes one more liturgical alternative to magic. While magic seeks to evade and escape the conditions of existence, liturgy, in this view, accepts and affirms them. Magic, some say, arises because people are continually confronted with sickness, death, and suffering. They turn to magic as a solution to the insoluble perplexities of life.[24] They seek a secret remedy when a legitimate public means fail them. Aqiva's death narrative rejects such evasive maneuvers as unnecessary. Even death may be a reward for love; pain and suffering need not be countered but rather accepted as the means to an even greater pleasure and happiness. Love, Aqiva would claim, recognizes the higher pleasures that ordinary disappointments and failures may bring in their wake. In the case of martyrdom, death is characterized as one received by a kiss from God; it brings with it an ecstasy that makes all other pleasures pale in comparison. This metaphor of death by a divine kiss becomes the dominant image that expresses entering into the divine kingdom through God's kiss. This motif, central to Michael Fishbane's book on the subject, is linked in this story with his recitation of the Jewish proclamation of God's oneness, the šema. The linking of Aqiva with both ascents into the heavenly realm and with the liturgies associated with that realm is an important one in Jewish literature. The story

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[22] Goldin, "Aqiba ben Joseph," 323.
[23] Ibid., 309-318.
[24] See Judah Goldin, "The Magic of Magic and Superstition,"in his *Studies in Midrash and Related Literature*, 337-357.

about the šema and its relationship to Aqiva's translation from life into the divine kingdom represents a significant variation on the theme of visiting God's palaces. Yet this version of Aqiva's story transforms the motif of ascent into an illustration of a this-worldly love, as the culmination of a dialogue with the Nations that teaches them how to love God truly.

Conclusions

What does the Jerusalem Talmud teach about magic through its narrative of the death of Aqiva? First, it teaches that magic is a process and attitude, not any particular action. What Aqiva achieves resembles indeed what any magician could attain—or at least what any God-fearing Jewish magician could perform. Withstanding pain and transcending unbearable circumstances might well be the result of magic as well as of liturgy. Secondly, however, it claims that the difference between magic and liturgy lies not in what it accomplishes but in its public display. If something is done so all can hear and see it, then it cannot, by definition, be magic. Finally, it claims that magic is antithetical to Judaism, not because it seeks to coerce the divine nor because it impairs monotheism in some theoretical way, but because the Jewish mission is precisely that of public proclamation.

William James wrote that the function of reason is to "redeem religion from unwholesome privacy," and such indeed seems to be the stance of the Jerusalem Talmud in its telling of the story of Aqiva's death.[25] The redemption, however, is not of religion by reason, but rather the redemption of "magic" by the public display of religion. Religion and magic share many of the same aims and concerns. They seek to show a similar transcendence to the pain and suffering of life. They do so, however, in contrasting ways. Magic offers a private, secret knowledge, a whispered spell that only the initiates can know. Religion in contrast stands open to the light of day. It speaks its liturgy out loud so all can hear. If the public is a redemption of the private, then religion in this context is understood as a redemption of magic.

Whether or not the rabbis were correct in their implication that Aqiva's magic contrasted with that of other magicians, their position is an important one. Rabbinic self-understanding emphasized the value of public accessibility. Rabbis, like any other elite leadership

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[25] William James, *The Variety of Religious Experience* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1914), 423

group, inevitably formed a small, tightly guarded fraternity. The ideal of public dissemination of skills and rituals remained honored more in the breach than in the practice. The fact of this elitism, however, should not distract from the significance of this position as an ideological one. To choose publicity as the key to distinguishing ritual from magic means to make an explicit decision concerning the nature of leadership and its authority. By pointing up that decision, the discussion of Rabbi Aqiva as a putative magician reveals a distinguishing characteristic of rabbinic ideology.

SHAMANIC INITIATORY DEATH AND RESURRECTION IN THE *HEKHALOT* LITERATURE

James R. Davila

1. *Shamanic Initiatory Transformations*

I have argued elsewhere that the most useful paradigm for understanding the strange collection of visionary and revelatory texts known as the *hekhalot* literature is an anthropological one.[1] The "descenders to the chariot," as they sometimes called themselves, can be understood as a type of shaman, that is, "a social functionary who, with the help of guardian spirits, attains ecstasy in order to create a rapport with the supernatural world on behalf of his group members," to quote Åke Hultkrantz's definition.[2] This paper explores one aspect of the shamanic vocation of the descenders to the chariot: the initiatory disintegration and reintegration that establishes the shaman's supernatural power.

The shaman has a direct link with the supernatural world, but this link is not forged without difficulty or pain; the shamanic vocation often brings great suffering into the lives of those who pursue it. It is characteristic of the Arctic shaman (although not unknown in other traditions) that the initiation into the otherworld is experienced as a violent upheaval that involves the destruction of the whole person by the spirits, followed by a kind of resurrection as a new being who is at home both in the mundane and the spiritual world. The initiant seems to endure being eaten alive or otherwise consumed—often the victim sees the process as though it were happening to someone else—until nothing is left but a skeleton. Consciousness is frequently lost at this point (understandably), but the initiant may watch his or

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[1] James R. Davila, "The Hekhalot Literature and Shamanism," *Society of Biblical Literature 1994 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, GA.: Scholars Press, 1994) 767-89. All translations of *hekhalot* texts in this article are my own and are based on a text reconstructed from the manuscripts published by Peter Schäfer in Schäfer et al., *Synopse zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1981); and (for 3 Enoch) Hugo Odeberg, *3 Enoch, or the Hebrew Book of Enoch* (1928; rpt. New York: Ktav, 1973). The Geniza text T.-S. K21.95.C is cited as G8. It was published by Peter Schäfer in *Geniza-Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1984) 97-111. All other abbreviations are those used in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.

[2] Åke Hultkrantz, "A Definition of Shamanism," *Temenos* 9 (1973) 25-37; the quotation appears on p. 34.

her own skeleton being reforged and reclothed with flesh. In any case, the new shaman will discover that the terrifying personal disintegration has been followed by a reintegration that brings with it powers over the spiritual world.

The experience of Autdaruta, a Greenland Inuit shaman who told his story to Knud Rassmussen, is fairly typical. In his childhood or youth, after the death of his father, he received a call from the spirits and "began to be a magician, but did not speak to any one about it." The following year, after moving south, he apprenticed himself to a very old master shaman. Autdaruta told Rassmussen:

> One day he [Autdaruta's teacher] came and said to me —
>
> "Travel east with me, and I will teach you something; you may need help yet, you poor fatherless boy."
>
> So we travelled together, and he told me on the way that he was going to make a great magician of me. We went ashore up a fjord, close to a cave, and the old man took off his clothes and crept inside. And he told me to watch carefully what happened next. I lay hidden a little way off and waited. It was not long before I saw a great bear come swimming along, crawl ashore, and approach the magician. It flung itself upon him, crunched him up, limb for limb, and ate him.
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> Then it vomited him out again and swam away.
>
> When I went up to the cave, the old man lay groaning. He was very much exhausted, but was able to row home himself. On the way back he told me that every time he allowed himself to be devoured alive by the bear he acquired greater power over his helping spirits.
>
> Some time afterwards, he took me on a journey again, and this time it was so that I myself might be eaten by the bear; this was necessary if I wished to attain to any good. We rowed off and came to the cave; the old man told me to take my clothes off, and I do not deny that I was somewhat uncomfortable at the thought of being devoured alive.
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> I had not been lying there long before I heard the bear coming. It attacked me and crunched me up, limb by limb, joint by joint, but strangely enough it did not hurt at all; it was only when it bit me in the heart that it did hurt frightfully.
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> From that day forth I felt that I ruled my helping-spirits. After that I acquired many fresh helping-spirits and no danger could any longer threaten me, as I was always protected.[3]

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[3] Joan Halifax, *Shamanic Voices: A Survey of Visionary Narratives* (New York/London: Arkana/Penguin, 1979) 108-109. For a cross-cultural overview of initiatory disintegrations and reintegrations, see Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (rev. ed.; Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964) 33-66. For more examples from the Inuit tradition as well as a discussion of the testimony of Autdaruta, see Dan Merkur, *Becoming Half Hidden: Shamanism and Initiation Among the Inuit* (rev. ed.; New York/London: Garland, 1992) 231-64.

For reasons that are not perfectly clear, this sort of initiatory death and revival is much less common outside of Arctic (and Australian) shamanism.[4] But it does occur occasionally in both Asian and Native American traditions. An example from the latter is found in the narrative of the Great Vision experienced by the Sioux shaman Nick Black Elk (as told to John G. Neihardt). This experience occurred when he was a nine-year-old boy in 1873 or 1874. The details of the vision cannot detain us here, but toward its end Nick was given a magic herb by a black-horned man who underwent various transformations, including one into a skeleton. (Nick had been destined to use this herb to wreak great destruction on his enemies when he was thirty-seven years old, but out of compassion for the women and children who would suffer, he gave up his vocation instead and converted to Catholicism.) At the end of this episode he informs us:

> During this whole time I did not notice how I was dressed. But now I noticed that I was painted red and all my joints were black. There was a white stripe between the joints all over my body. And whenever I would breath (sic), I would be breathing lightning. My bay horse had lightning stripes on it. The horse's mane was like clouds.[5]

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[4] Merkur suggests that this experience of disintegration and reintegration is a form of anxiety attack generated by sensory deprivation (e.g., "kayak-angst" among the Inuit), and that perhaps the natural environment in the Arctic and Australia may be more conducive to sensory deprivation than that normally experienced by Native Americans (see *Becoming Half Hidden* 250-56).

Carmen Blacker, following Ichiro Hori, attributes the rareness of this initiatory experience in Japan to differences between Arctic hunting culture and Japanese agricultural society: "The dismemberment and skeleton motifs suggest a hunting, pastoral people. The contrasting elements found in the Japanese tales of the cave, the passage through a hole down to a subterranean world, betoken a return to the womb of the earth mother goddess characteristic of an agricultural people" (*The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* [2nd ed.; London: Unwin Hyman, 1986] 346 n. 13). One difficulty with this thesis is that this experience is also rare among Native American hunting cultures.

If Merkur's analysis is correct, the descriptions of initiatory disintegration and reintegration associated with the descenders to the chariot may be due to the emphasis in their ascetic practices on prolonged isolation in surroundings conducive to sensory deprivation.

[5] Raymond J. DeMallie (ed.), *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given to John G. Neihardt* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1984) 137. In this volume DeMallie published the original notes of Neihardt's conversations with Nick Black Elk, taken in shorthand by Neihardt's daughter, Enid. Black Elk's story is better known from Neihardt's earlier publication, *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* (2nd ed.; Lincoln NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1979 [1st ed., 1932]), which, however, heavily paraphrases the notes and sometimes seems to obscure their meaning (see, for example, the next note). The corresponding passage in *Black Elk Speaks* is on p. 44.

This element of his vision is later tied to an internal transformation and spiritual mission. After he awoke from his vision, he was visited by his relative Whirlwind Chaser, a medicine man, who told Nick's father, "Your son there is sitting in a sacred manner. I can see that there is a special duty for him to do. Just as he came in I could see the power of lightning all through his body."[6]

Lakota tradition also suggests a connection between the sweat lodge ceremony and an initiatory death and resurrection. During his first sweat lodge, in preparation for his first vision quest, Leonard Crow Dog, a Native American Sioux shaman, was told, "This steam is the holy breath of the universe. Hokshila, boy, you are in your mother's womb again. You are going to be reborn."[7] The myth of the Stone Boy, as told to James Walker by two native informants, contains a number of episodes in which the dead are raised by being subjected to the sweat lodge ceremony.[8]

2. *Dangerous Encounters with the Divine in the Judaic Tradition*

In the Hebrew Bible, as well as in many ancient mythologies, there is a persistent tradition that it is deadly dangerous to have a direct encounter with the divine. A typical expression of this sentiment is found in the vision of the prophet Isaiah, which took place in Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem in the year 742 B.C.E. (Isaiah 6). This fear for one's life in the presence of God is a well-established theme in biblical literature.[9]

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[6] DeMallie (ed.), *The Sixth Grandfather* 150; compare Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks* 49. Note that Neihardt's rendition weakens the direct connection between Whirlwind Chaser's statement and Nick's vision, since it reads "a power like a light" instead of "the power of lightning."

[7] Halifax, *Shamanic Voices* 81.

[8] James R. Walker, *Lakota Myth*, ed. Elaine A. Jahner (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1983) 93, 97, 150.

[9] After his crippling encounter with a divine being, Jacob counted himself fortunate to have escaped with his life (Gen 32:24-32). The instinctive reaction of Samson's father, after he and his wife experienced a theophany of the angel of YHWH heralding the birth of their mighty son, was "We shall surely die, for we have seen God" (Judg 13:22). There is also the strange story about Moses, to the effect that when he came down from Mount Sinai after receiving the second set of tablets inscribed with the ten commandments, something about the appearance of the skin of his face so terrified the Israelites that he found it necessary to wear a veil (Exod 34:29-35). The traditional interpretation of v. 29 is that Moses' face glowed with an echo of the divine glory. However, William H. Propp has shown that it is philologically and contextually more likely that the meaning of the verse is that Moses' face was scorched, and thus horribly disfigured by the divine radiation ("The Skin of Moses' Face—Transfigured or Disfigured?" *CBQ* 49 (1987) 375-86). Note that the angels who serve before the throne of God suffer a similar fate (see below).

The fiery, and even radioactive nature of the heavenly world is also a commonplace in the *hekhalot* literature. The angels, like Isaiah's seraphim ("burning ones"), are by nature aflame. The heavenly realm itself is pictured as burning with fire throughout (see, e.g., *Hekhalot Rabbati* §101; 3 *Enoch* 25:1-3 [§39]; *Ma'aseh Merkavah* §§554-55). Even given the flaming nature of the angels, however, they in turn cannot withstand the direct sight of God. In Isaiah's vision the seraphim must cover their faces so as not to look God in the eye. This theme is also picked up in the *hekhalot* literature. The attending angels, including the inconceivably mighty living creatures who form the legs of the throne of God, must cover their faces to protect themselves from the divine radiance. Only then is it safe for God to uncover his face (*Hekhalot Rabbati* §§183-84, 189). Nevertheless, even these precautions are not always enough. The following passage from the *Hekhalot Rabbati* describes the divine glory and the effect it has on those beings fortunate or unfortunate enough to be exposed to it too directly or for too long.

> (§159) The fine Presence, adorned Presence, Presence of beauty, Presence of flame, the Presence of YHWH, God of Israel, when He sits enthroned on His throne of glory and His dignity is perfected in the seat of His adornment. His beauty is finer than the beauty of the mighty acts of His adornment, made to ascend higher than the adornments of bridegrooms and brides in their bridal chamber. He who gazes on Him shall be torn apart at once; the one who peers at His beauty is poured out at once like a ladle. Those who attend on Him today do not attend on Him again tomorrow, and those who attend on Him tomorrow do not attend again, for their strength has grown weak and their faces have turned black, their mind wanders and their eyes have darkened after [seeing] the adornment of the splendor of the beauty of their King. As it is written, "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa 6:3).[10]

This text seems to allude to two distinct groups. The second, which "attends on" God, is clearly made up of the angelic beings who serve near the throne of glory. By the end of the first day of their existence the scorching heat of the divine presence has afflicted them with

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There are other accounts in the Bible of dangerous encounters with God or divine beings (e.g., Exod 4:24-26; Num 22:21-35). For an example from extrabiblical myth, see the Greek story of Semele, the mortal mother of the god Dionysus. Zeus, disguised as a mortal man, became her lover, but Hera persuaded her to demand of Zeus that he appear to her in his true form. She was burned to death by his radiance, but the quick action of Hermes saved her unborn child, Dionysus. (See Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, vol. 1 [rev. ed.; London/New York: Penguin, 1960] 56.)

[10] Cf. 3 *Enoch* 22B:7 (P. Alexander, "3 [Hebrew Apocalypse of] Enoch," *OTP* vol. 1, 305).

something remarkably similar to radiation sickness; they wither, lose their faculties, and die.[11] But it is the first group that interests us in this discussion. They "gaze" and "peer" at God and as a result are "torn apart at once" and are "poured out at once like a ladle." Who are they? The description of their actions makes the answer clear. The verb "to gaze" (מסתכל) is frequently used in the *hekhalot* literature to describe the visionary gazing of the descenders to the chariot at the throne of God.[12] Likewise, in the *hekhalot* texts the verb "to peer" (מציץ) is used mainly of the four who entered the garden. Each of them "peered" into the garden (presumed to be "paradise" or the heavenly realm in these texts) and went to his appropriate fate.[13] This is our first indication that the descenders to the chariot, who literally rush in where angels fear to tread, are regarded as facing significant danger in obtaining their goal of a direct vision of God.

Two rather difficult passages in the *Hekhalot Zutarti* seem to tie the vision of God to the dangers of the descent. The opening paragraph reads:

> (§335) If you want to be unique in the world, to have the mysteries of the world and the secrets of wisdom revealed to you, repeat this teaching and be careful with it until the day of your separation. Do not seek understanding of what is behind you and do not search out the words of your lips. You will understand what is in your heart when you merit the beauty of the chariot. Be careful with the glory of your Creator, and do not descend to it. And if you descend to it, do not enjoy it. And if you enjoy it, your end is to be banished from the world. "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter" (Prov 25:2), lest you be banished from the world.

This section promises the practitioner both special knowledge, presumably *Sar Torah* revelations, and "the beauty of the chariot," meaning the experience of the otherworldly journey and the vision of God. However, the warnings in the last part of the paragraph are obscure.

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[11] This idea is based on a midrash of Lamentations 3:23 which is found in the rabbinic literature (see David J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* [Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1988] 267, 270).

[12] E.g., 3 *Enoch* 1:1 (§1; Alexander, "3 [Hebrew Apocalypse of] Enoch," *OTP* vol. 1, 255-56); *Hekhalot Rabbati* §§81, 200; *Hekhalot Zutarti* §§337/347, 349/361, 412; G8 2a.46.

[13] *Hekhalot Zutarti* §§338/344, 339/345; *Merkavah Rabba* §§671-72. The verb is also used in other passages to describe the descenders to the chariot looking at the vision of the throne of God: *Hekhalot Rabbati* §§102 (discussed below) 225; G8 2a.25. Curiously, every other use of this verb in the *hekhalot* literature has God or angels as its subject: §331; *Sar Panim* §636; §791.

They seem to say that it is preferable not to descend to the chariot, but if one does so, he should certainly not "enjoy" the experience, on pain, apparently, of death. Perhaps "enjoying" the glory of God is a technical term for some sort of magical praxis that was disapproved of by the writer. Whatever the exact meaning, the association of the vision of God with deadly danger is clear.[14]

The next paragraph (§336) gives an incantation revealed to Moses when he ascended to God. Next come variant versions of the story of the four who entered the garden, along with accounts of ascents of Moses and R. Akiva (§§337-48). Then comes a passage that describes the powers of the descenders to the chariot (§349 and the first sentence of §350). Then we read:

> (§350) First, this is written: "For a human being shall not see Me and live" (Exod 33:20). Second, it is written "that God speaks with a human being and he lives" (Deut 5:24 [21]). Third, it is written: "And I saw YHWH seated on a throne" (cf. Isa 6:1b).
>
> (§351) And what is His name? SSYYT KSPN WDNYN DNYN NWN NYNYH, since all the holiness of His hosts is fire, even the fire of YH ŠWWH HYY ṢBY fire BNYN, effulgence KYŠN NGWNY 'BYRW, seated on an exalted and lifted-up throne. "Holy, holy, holy, YHWH of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa 6:3). Blessed be the glory of YHWH from His place (Ezek 3:12). 'WṬYYS PWSWQSYW HYṬH ŠḤQH QSPP PṬQY ṬWQW 'PHH SPHQ SWPQ Y'YQ NYSHH QQH SQWS WHS W'QY' H' 'QṬM PṬHYY, and there are those who say before Him: "A throne of glory on high from the beginning [is the place of our sanctuary]" (Jer 17:12).
>
> (§352) The holy ones of the Most High say: "We see 'something like the appearance of the lightning-flash'" (cf. Ezek 1:14).
>
> The prophets say: "'In a dream' we see a vision like a man who sees 'a vision of the night'"(Job 33:15).
>
> The kings who are on the earth[15] say: "'LWQ' KTR GHYM."
>
> But R. Akiva[16] says: "He is, as it were,[17] like us, and He is greater than all. And this is His glory, which is made secret from us."[18]

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[14] Peter Schäfer reads the whole paragraph as a "purposeful revision" of the prohibition of esoteric practice in m *Ḥagiga* 2:1, "taken up in a quite playful manner" (*The Hidden and Manifest God: Some Major Themes in Early Jewish Mysticism* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992] 70-71; the quotation is on p. 70.) His interpretation is surely correct, as far as it goes, but it does not elucidate the warning against enjoying the glory of God.

[15] Var. "Those who walk on the earth."

[16] The name Akiva is missing in all but one manuscript.

[17] See Peter Schäfer, et al., *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur III §§ 335-597* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1989) 20 n. 1 for a discussion of this term.

[18] Or "And this is His glory, that He is made secret from us."

> Moses says to all of them: "Do not inquire into your own words; rather, let Him be blessed in His place." Therefore it is written: "Blessed be the glory of YHWH from His place" (Ezek 3:12).

The issue in the quoted passage seems to be the contradictory statements in the Bible about whether a human being can see God and live. The first passage quoted, Exod 33:20, denies the possibility altogether. The second, Deut 5:24, asserts that the Israelites did just this when they experienced the revelation of God at Sinai. Finally, Isa 6:1 introduces Isaiah's vision of God. The implied question is, Who is right? If it is fatal to see God, how was it accomplished by Israel at Sinai and Isaiah in the temple? Peter Schäfer believes that the paragraph contains its own answer. The prophet Isaiah is taken to be one of the descenders to the chariot (since he too saw the vision of God's throne), and the fact that he returned unscathed establishes that there is indeed a way for human beings to survive the sight of God.[19] Schäfer may be right here, although it is not clear to me how the Israelites' vision of God on Mount Sinai is to be integrated into this interpretation. Be that as it may, the question is addressed further in the rest of this section.

The meaning of the second paragraph, especially in its context, is far from transparent. Pointing to the initial question, "And what is His name?" Schäfer suggests that "this entails that the name of God is the crucial revelation for the *merkavah* mystic. . . . The 'vision' of God consists, so to speak, of the communication of his names."[20] C. R. A. Morray-Jones focuses on the use of the term "glory" (*kabod*): "[This paragraph] establishes a link between the *kabod* in the preexistent celestial sanctuary and the earthly temple."[21] Both points seem to apply. The paragraph seeks to present theurgical knowledge of God's name and presence (glory) which is relevant for making the descent to the chariot.

The final section addresses how various kinds of beings experience the sight of God. The holy ones (angels) describe an element from Ezekiel's *merkavah* vision. The prophets see visions in dreams. The statement of the kings of the earth (or mortals in general?) is incomprehensible and probably corrupt. R. Akiva alludes to the vision of God in the *Shi'ur Qomah*: God looks like us, but is of enormous dimensions, and his true nature remains hidden from us. Moses gets the last

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[19] Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God* 58

[20] Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God* 58.

[21] C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1-12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostolate. Part 2: Paul's Heavenly Ascent and Its Significance," *HTR* 86 (1993) 265-92; the quotation is on p. 281.

word. He seems to command a shift from speaking about God to blessing (i.e., praising) him. Again, the general sense is clear, although the details are not. Angels have a direct view of the chariot. Prophets see obscurely in dreams. The descenders to the chariot see God in the vision of the *Shi'ur Qomah*, although their human limitations prevent a complete understanding of what they see. Schäfer takes the statement of Moses to be an anticlimax. Moses simply repeats the traditional belief that the job of both human beings and angels is "to praise God during the daily liturgy."[22] This much is certainly true, but it seems to me that Moses may also be affirming Akiva's position by encouraging the "blessing" of God in the sense of the ecstatic praise described in the *hekhalot* literature as one of the means used by the descenders to the chariot to induce their trances.

In any case, once again, the vision of God is treated as a potentially fatal enterprise. But some hope is offered as well. The Israelites at Sinai and the prophet Isaiah in his vision in Solomon's Temple looked at God and lived. R. Akiva (presumably representing the descenders to the chariot) refers to the vision of the *Shi'ur Qomah*, which is especially associated with his group. This successful perception of the beatific vision is associated with knowledge of the divine names and the proper praise of God, both elements that belong to the ascetic practices attributed to the descenders to the chariot.

Vivid descriptions of this danger are found in both the *Hekhalot Rabbati* and the *Hekhalot Zutarti*. In the continuation of the text mentioned above, which described the fiery nature of the angels around the chariot (§101), we read:

> (§102) A condition of holiness, a condition of might, a fearsome condition, a confounding condition, a condition of quivering, a condition of cold sweat, a condition of confoundedness, a condition of shuddering is the condition of the shirt of ZHRRY'L YHWH, God of Israel, who is garlanded and who comes onto His throne of glory. And it [the shirt] is engraved, and all of it is filled inside and out with "YHWH, YHWH." And no eyes of any creature are able to gaze at Him, neither eyes of flesh and blood nor the eyes of His attendants. And the one who gazes at Him and peers at and sees Him—*flashbacks* seize his eyeballs and his eyeballs emit and bring forth torches of fire and they scorch and burn him. The fire that goes forth from the man who gazes burns him and scorches him. For what reason? Because of the likeness of the eyes of the shirt of ZHRRY'L YHWH, God of Israel, who is garlanded and comes onto the throne of glory. . . . (§103) . . . For with six voices the *beings*[23] who carry

[22] Schäfer, *The Hidden and Manifest God* 59.

[23] The difficult word מדה (literally, a "measure") sometimes seems to have this meaning in the *hekhalot* literature (cf. Halperin, *Faces of the Chariot* 430 and 545 n. ii).

His throne of glory sing, the cherubim and the ophannim and the holy living creatures, with voice after voice that is made to ascend over its companion and that is modulated before Him.
(§104) The voice of the first: whoever hears it immediately moans and prostrates himself. The voice of the second: whoever listens to it immediately gets lost and does not return again. The voice of the third: whoever hears it is seized by convulsions and dies immediately. The voice of the fourth: whoever listens to it—immediately the skull of his head, as well as his frame, is shattered, and most of the joints of his ribs are torn out. The voice of the fifth: whoever hears it is immediately poured out like a ladle and it dissolves all of him into blood. The voice of the sixth: whoever listens to it—immediately skipping seizes his heart and his heart shakes and overturns his bowels and it dissolves his gall inside him like water. As it is written: "Holy, holy, holy" (Isa 6:3).

Once again, the victim of this dissolution must be the descender to the chariot. This passage echoes §159, translated above. The subject "gazes at" and "peers at" the divine vision. As a result he is torn apart and "poured out like a ladle." But what is the cause and purpose of this horrifying ordeal? The most obvious answer is that this is presented as the fate of unworthy human beings who somehow manage to pass the preliminary tests of the descent (such as the water test) and who then stand before the throne of God. They are consumed by the radiant glory of God's holiness. This seems to be the position of Ira Chernus, who argues that the best way to read this section "is to assume that in fact this text is describing dangers—very dreadful dangers—facing the mystic who wants to see God. . . . I think, then, that the text is saying that no creature can see God under ordinary circumstances, but if an individual is willing to accept these terrifying dangers then he may in fact see God."[24] Although Chernus does not make it explicit, his assumption seems to be that the person destroyed in this violent way must be an unworthy practitioner whose death illustrates the dangers of the descent to the chariot. Presumably a worthy candidate would escape harm. Some support for this interpretation is found in the *Merkavah Rabba* in a warning given to R. Ishmael by R. Akiva:

(§681) R. Ishmael said:
R. Akiva said to me:
Son of the proud, go, return to the presence of R. Nehuniah ben HaQanah and ask your master, that he may tell you and explain to you discernment regarding this praxis: how one makes use of it and how people adjure with it, lest you err and use it in a way contrary to the

[24] Ira Chernus, "Visions of God in Merkabah Mysticism," *JSJ* 13 (1982) 123-46; the quotation is on pp. 129-30.

> *halakhah* and you act inappropriately and they (the angels) attack you as in the case of so-and-sos whom they (the angels) attacked and whose gall was dissolved inside them (the victims) to become like water. For they listened to what was contrary to the *halakhah* and they acted inappropriately.[25]

R. Nehuniah tells Ishmael that he has been protected thus far only because of his priestly status, and then R. Nehuniah gives him instructions for adjuring angels that are nearly identical to those he gives his disciples in the *Hekhalot Rabbati* (§203b-5).[26] This paragraph uses the image of dissolution in a way similar to §§104 and 159, but it pertains to an attack, presumably by the angels, rather than a self-immolation caused by seeing God face to face. Thus it is a closer parallel to §204 than to §§102-104 and 159, although all three passages deal with the dangers of the celestial descent for mortals.

Instructions in the *Hekhalot Rabbati* on what the descender to the chariot should expect in the seventh palace also focus on dangers from angels during the descent.

> (§246) Greatest of all, there are the five hundred and twelve eyes in the four living creatures opposite the gate of the seventh palace. All the forms of their faces are faces of sixteen by sixteen faces which belong to every single living creature, opposite the gate of the seventh palace.
>
> (§247) When a man seeks to descend to the chariot, ʿAnaphi'el opens the doors of the gate of the seventh palace for him. This man enters and stands at the threshold of the gate of the seventh palace, and the holy

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[25] An echo of the language of §§104 and 159 is also found in the David Apocalypse. When the angel SNWNY'L, the Prince of the Presence, revealed to R. Ishmael the punishments to be meted out to Israel, Ishmael exclaimed "As soon as I heard this strong voice I was poured out and struck dumb, and I fell backward" (§124). Here the expression "to be poured out" is used metaphorically.

[26] The passage in the *Hekhalot Rabbati* reads:

> (§203b) We came and sat before him, and the associates were a whole crowd standing on their feet, because they were seeing to the *globes* of fire and the torches of light that they had set as a barrier between us and them. And R. Nehuniah ben HaQanah sat and set out in order all the matters of the chariot: descent and ascent; how one who descends, descends, and how one who ascends, ascends:
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> (§204) When someone seeks to descend into the chariot, he calls on Suriah, Prince of the Presence, and adjures him one hundred and twelve times by ṬWṬRWSY'Y YWY who is called ṬWṬRWSY'Y ṢWRṬQ ṬWṬRBY'L ṬWPGR ʿŠRWYLY'Y ZBWDY'L and ZHRRY'L ṬND'L and ŠQDHWZY'Y DHYBYRWN and ʿDYRYRWN YWY God of Israel.
>
> (§205) And he must be careful not to add to the one hundred and twelve times, nor to subtract from them. And if he adds or subtracts, his blood is on his own head. But his mouth must only enunciate the names, and the fingers of his hands must count to one hundred and twelve. And at once he descends to and has authority over the chariot.

> living creatures lift up five hundred and twelve eyes on him. And every single eye of the holy living creatures is split open like a great winnowers'[27] sieve. And the appearance of their eyes is as if "they dart like lightning" (Nah 2:5). Besides, there are the eyes of the mighty cherubim and the ophannim of the Shekhinah, which resemble torches of light and of flames of glowing juniper coals.
>
> (§248) And this man is in a cold sweat, and he shrinks back and shakes. He is confounded, confused, and overcome, and he falls backward. But 'Anaphi'el the prince supports him, he and the sixty-three guardians of the gates of the seven palaces. All of them help him and say to him, "Do not fear, son of the beloved seed! Enter and see 'the King in his beauty' (Isa 33:17). You shall not be destroyed, nor shall you be burned.
>
> (§249 is a *merkavah* hymn.)
>
> (§250) And they give him strength. At once (God?) blows the horn "from above the firmament over their heads" (Ezek 1:26), and the holy living creatures cover their faces, and the cherubim and the ophannim turn their faces, and he enters and stands before the throne of glory.

Here the descender to the chariot is promised by the angels that he will be spared both destruction and burning. Good as their word, they avert their faces in order to let him pass into the celestial throne room, where he proceeds to recite the hymns of the throne.

Two other passages in the *hekhalot* literature deal with how to avoid angelic immolation. The first is a prayer that appears at different points in the MSS:

> (§§393//470//730) May You have goodwill, YHWH our God, whose mercy presses down in the hour when we invoke Your great and fearsome name, so that we are not drowned in fire. For all Your attendants are flaming fire. May You have goodwill, O merciful and good Father, for in that hour we are saved from the harmful (spirits).

The second is one of a group of adjurations of the Prince of the Presence found in the *Sar Panim*. It is to be recited after carrying out a set of ascetic exercises that are typical for these texts.[28]

> (§626) In this (forty-two letter) name, with this language, I call to you, 'WZHY', Prince of the Presence, Youth, attendant before the King of the world. And he is a prince and a master over the whole host on high.

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[27] This word is incomprehensible in the manuscripts. I translate according to David J. Halperin's emendation ("A Sexual Image in *Hekhalot Rabbati* and Its Implications," *Proceedings of the First International Conference on the History of Jewish Mysticism: Early Jewish Mysticism*, ed. Joseph Dan [Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought VI, 1-2; Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1987] 117-32, esp. 118, 126-27 n. 7).

[28] These ascetic exercises are described in *Sar Panim* §623.

(§627) I adjure you and I decree upon you that you should augment me so as to be bound to my will. And you shall accept the adjuration of my decree, and you shall do what I ask, and you shall fulfill my request. You shall not confound me, you shall not make me quake, you shall not perforate me, you shall not put my frame into a cold sweat, my ankles shall not slip, and you shall not make the speech of my lips err. But let me be strengthened and made valiant, and let the adjuration be made mighty, and let the name be in order in my throat. Let no cramp seize me, and do not let the foot of your attendants make me wander so as to confound me and to make me fear and so as to make my hands slack.[29] And let me not be drowned in the fire and in the flame, in the tempest and the storm that goes with you, wondrous and elevated one.

Chernus is correct in arguing that there are deadly dangers to be faced during the descent to the chariot, and that some of them are fatal to the unworthy and ignorant, but can be overcome by those properly initiated. Specifically, it is possible to neutralize the threat from the guardian angels by reciting the proper hymns, presenting the proper seals, and passing tests along the way. But this explanation does not suffice for §§102-104 and 159, which deal not with angelic encounters but with the experience of seeing God face to face. A number of points speak against this interpretation for these passages. First, given the horrendous trials that must be overcome on the way to the chariot, it is hard to imagine that anyone unworthy of the vision could get as far as the throne of God in the innermost palace. But even if we grant the possibility, there is nothing in either §§102-104 or §159 that even hints that the descender to the chariot who suffers this violence is sinful or wanting in merit or instruction. Rather, the indication is that simply gazing or peering at God has this most unpleasant side effect. Third, a text in the *Hekhalot Zutarti* recounts another such immolation, but this time the victim is named. He is R. Ishmael, the narrator and hero of much of the *hekhalot* literature. Speaking of the obscure angel MGH(Y)ŠH or MNḤŠH, he reports:

(§420) And he stands at the first gate and ministers at the great gate. When I saw him, my hands and feet were burned, and I was standing without hands and feet until PNYYWN the prince from among the heavenly attendants appeared to me before the throne of glory opposite the inner room of the seraphim, whose name is like His name, and it is one name. And he stands before the throne of glory and tends the throne, and he clothes (God) with the shirt and adorns the Ḥashmal and opens

[29] The text and meaning of this sentence are unclear (see Peter Schäfer et al., *Übersetzung der Hekhalot-Literatur IV §§ 598-985* [Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1991] 23).

> the gates of salvation to show grace and lovingkindness and mercies in the eyes of all who see him.[30]

Here R. Ishmael began to be consumed by the same fiery dissolution that overtook the nameless victims in §§102-104 and 159. But surely in this case the process is not one of punishment for sinfulness or unworthiness. Rather, the common factor is that R. Ishmael "saw" the inhabitants of the heavenly throne room, apparently while he was in front of the throne of glory (note the specific mention of God's shirt).[31]

One more example of this visionary disintegration and reintegration is found in the *hekhalot* literature. It is perhaps the most illuminating case, but I have delayed introducing it because it is in one of the latest strata of these texts. It is the description of the transformation of the mortal Enoch into the angel Metatron in 3 *Enoch* 3-15 (§§4-19). But before we look at this passage it is worthwhile to examine the biblical and postbiblical narratives about the antediluvian patriarch Enoch.

3. *The Enoch Tradition*

The earliest mention of Enoch is found in Genesis 5:18-24. This intriguing fragment is the only reference to Enoch in the Hebrew Bible.[32] It reads like a summary of a much longer story and raises more questions than it answers. Why did he have such a (comparatively!) short life? What does it mean to say that "Enoch walked with God"? And most intriguing of all, what should we make of the statement "and he was not, for God took him"?

These questions were not lost on ancient Jewish writers, and their interest in Enoch is shown by the compendium of literature known

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[30] A variant version of this episode is found in G8 2b.36-44.

[31] On this celestial garment see Gershom G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (2nd ed.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1965) 56-64.

[32] Another Enoch, a son of Cain, is listed in the Yahwistic genealogy in Gen 4:17-18. It is likely that this genealogy and the Priestly one share a common archetype in the form of a list of names. Such "genealogical stocks" are known elsewhere in the West Semitic world. But by the time of the final redaction of Genesis, the two genealogies had developed independently into very different forms. It is clear that the editor of Genesis considered the Enoch mentioned in chapter 4 to be a different person from the Enoch in chapter 5. As far as I can tell, no subsequent text in the later literature about Enoch identified the two figures. For Genesis 4-5 see my article "The Flood Hero as King and Priest," *JNES* 54 (1995) 199-214, esp. 207-10.

today as the book of 1 *Enoch*. Written originally in Aramaic and perhaps Hebrew it is fully preserved only in an Ethiopic translation based on a Greek translation. Fragments of the original Aramaic were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls and were published by J. T. Milik.[33] The book of 1 *Enoch* is actually a library of texts about Enoch. No less than five works, written over a period of centuries, are included in this collection. In 1 *Enoch* the adventures of Enoch are recounted in much more detail than in the Bible. Whether these more detailed legends are postbiblical exegetical expansion of the biblical passage, survivals of a preexilic Enoch tradition that was purged from the Bible, or both, does not concern us here.[34] Our interest is in how these ancient traditions can illuminate our understanding of the figure of Enoch in 3 *Enoch*.

The Book of the Watchers tells the story of the lust of the angels for mortal women and the subsequent fall of these angels. This story also appears in very abbreviated form in Gen 6:1-4. In 1 *Enoch* 14-16, Enoch interceded for these angels (the "watchers") and as a result was caught up by God into heaven, where he saw a vision of the celestial throne room with God himself seated on the throne. (This vision obviously has a great deal in common with the descriptions of the heavenly realm in the *hekhalot* literature.) In this text, too, the danger of looking directly at God is emphasized. God then rejected Enoch's intercession for the watchers. The phrase "and he was not, for God took him" is interpreted to mean that Enoch was taken up to heaven bodily while still alive. In the remainder of the Book of the Watchers (chs. 17-36) we are told how he was given a tour of the heavenly realm by the angel Uriel. Presumably he remained in heaven permanently.

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[33] J. T. Milik and Matthew Black, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976).

[34] Milik argues that the verses on Enoch in Genesis 5 are dependent on the Astronomical Book (*Books of Enoch* 8). He also believes that part of the Book of the Watchers (chs. 6-19) served as a source for the story of the Nephilim in Gen 6:1-4 (*Books of Enoch* 22-31). His position on these dates has not been widely accepted (see, for example, the review of this volume by James C. VanderKam in *Maarav* 3.1 [1982] 85-97). Margaret Barker is inclined, at minimum, to find a core of preexilic traditions from the Judean royal cult in the literature of 1 *Enoch*. She also seems to allow for the possibility that some of the extant Enoch literature was composed during the monarchy (see *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* [London: SPCK, 1987], especially ch. 1; idem., *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* [London: SPCK, 1988]).

Whether or not such a translation to heaven is envisioned in the biblical text, this interpretation of Gen 5:24 is widely accepted in the Enoch literature written after the Book of the Watchers. The second section of 1 *Enoch* (chs. 37-71), the Similitudes of Enoch, is a case in point. This document, which is missing from the Qumran fragments, is dated by Milik as late as the third century C.E., although many other scholars are inclined to put it sometime in the first century C.E.[35] It consists of three cycles of visions revealed to Enoch which deal with the coming apocalyptic judgment and the mysterious heavenly redeemer figure called the "Son of Man." The last two chapters, which may be a secondary addition to the main work, describe how Enoch ascended to heaven, where he, in defiance of all narrative logic, was himself transformed into the Son of Man.

The book of 2 *Enoch*, which seems originally to have been written in Greek, survives only in a translation into Old Church Slavonic. Much of the material in it probably goes back to the early centuries C.E., although its final forms (two recensions are preserved) appear to be the result of a long process of transmission.[36] According to this work also, Enoch ascended to heaven and was given a tour of the celestial realm. He was likewise transformed into an angelic being when he came before the throne of God.[37]

4. *Enoch and Metatron*

This, then, is the mythic background of the story in 3 *Enoch* 3-15 (§§4-19). I have digressed concerning this tradition because it has been shown by David Suter that there are striking parallels between the

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[35] Milik, *Books of Enoch* 89-98. For a summary of scholarship on the Similitudes see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1984) 142-54.

Jub 4:16-26 also tells a legend of Enoch that seems to be dependent on the Book of the Watchers. *Jubilees* is fully preserved only in an Ethiopic translation and is generally agreed to have been written in the second century B.C.E (see O. S. Wintermute, "Jubilees," *OTP* vol. 2, 35-50 and 62-63; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination* 63-67).

[36] For discussions of date and provenance see F. I. Andersen, "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," *OTP* vol. 1, 91-100; Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 83-87.

[37] The rabbinic literature also preserves traditions about an initiatory death and resurrection of the Israelites before Mount Sinai. Elements of this legend are probably also related to the translation of Enoch in 3 *Enoch* and the initiatory transformation elsewhere in the *hekhalot* texts. For the rabbinic material see Ira Chernus, *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism: Studies in the History of Midrash* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1982) 33-73.

Similitudes and 3 *Enoch*.[38] The latter clearly flows out of the tradition that produced the former, whether the connection is oral tradition, literary transmission, or both. With this in mind, let us now turn to the account of Enoch's apotheosis in 3 *Enoch*.

The story begins with the ascent of R. Ishmael to the seventh palace and his encounter with God and the angels. The angel Metatron reveals that he was once the man Enoch, but he was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot as a witness to the generation of the Flood. Although he was challenged by the angels, who believed that a mortal had no place in heaven, God overruled them and revealed celestial secrets to Enoch, enlarged him to enormous size, and enthroned him in what sounds very like a royal investiture. After receiving the homage of the other angels, he underwent a fiery transformation into the highest angel in heaven:

> (3 *Enoch* 15:1b-2; [§19]) As soon as the Holy One, blessed be He, took me to serve the throne of glory, the wheels of the chariot, and all the needs of the Shekhinah, at once my flesh was changed into flame, my tendons into a fire of glowing heat, my bones to glowing juniper coals, my eyelids to radiance of lightning-bolts, my eyeballs to torches of fire, the hair of my head to glowing heat and flame, all my limbs to wings of burning fire, and my bodily frame to scorching fire. On my right were hewers of fiery flames, on my left torches were burning. There blew around me wind, storm, and tempest, and the noise of earthquake upon earthquake was in front of me and behind me.

The apotheosis of Enoch in this passage is clearly a literary event, not necessarily meant to describe the actual or potential experience of a descender to the chariot. Nevertheless, it provides an important context for the very difficult texts in the earlier strata of the *hekhalot* literature which we have been examining. Gershom G. Scholem rightly uses this passage to interpret §§102-104. He writes that the vision of the "cosmic raiment" (the shirt of God)

> induces in some way the mystical experience which, according to 3 Enoch 15:1, transformed the human Enoch into the angel Metatron. In both cases it is said that the eyeballs are transformed into torches of fire. This is not, it is to be noted, a description of dangers confronting the mystic, but of a mystical transfiguration taking place within him. What is

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[38] David Winston Suter, *Tradition and Composition in the Parables of Enoch* (SBLDS 47; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979) 14-23. These parallels include the use of similar terminology (such as רוחות, "spirits," for angels; בחירים, "elect ones," for the righteous; the phrase "the throne of His glory"; and the Trisagion [Isa 6:3b]), a cosmological oath that reveals the secrets of creation, and the transformation of Enoch into an angelic being.

> a permanent transfiguration in the case of Enoch, however, is only a temporary experience in the case of the Merkabah mystic . . ."[39]

Morray-Jones, in response to Scholem's comment, writes:

> Chernus disputes this interpretation, arguing that the passage refers to the danger of the vision of the Glory, but both are surely right in what they affirm and wrong in what they deny. The meaning must be that the vision of the garment of the Glory, which embodies the Name of God, involves a transformation of the mystic's body into fire, a process which is terrifyingly dangerous, even fatal should he prove unworthy.[40]

Morray-Jones also notes two other passages that support the thesis that this immolating transformation was experienced by worthy as well as unworthy descenders to the chariot. In the *Hekhalot Zutarti* §349 (= §361), R. Akiva asserts that the descender to the chariot is able "to walk in rivers of fire and to know the lightning." Later in the *Hekhalot Zutarti* we read:

> (§366) R. Akiva said:
> I had a vision of and I observed the whole inhabited world and I saw it as it is. I ascended in a wagon of fire and I gazed on the palaces of hail and I found GRWSQ' GRWSQ' that sits on the burning sea.[41]

Both walking in fire and riding in a wagon of fire "would hardly be possible in an ordinary body."[42]

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[39] Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism* 60.

[40] Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism in the Apocalyptic-Merkabah Tradition," *JJS* 43 (1992) 1-31; the quotation is on p. 25.

[41] A similar passage appears in the Magic Book (§496) which reads:

R Akiva said:

I saw (and) you (pl.) shall see those who tread on the inhabited land of the earth. And what is it? I ascended <<in the world>> in a wagon of fire. What did I see? I saw GRWSQ' that sits on the burning sea . . ."

The word GRWSQ' (with variants) is incomprehensible and appears to be corrupt in both passages. In §496 the word בעלמא, "in the world," is a corrupt dittography of בענלא, "in a wagon." The word חחזו, "you shall see," may also be a dittography of the previous word חויתי, "I saw." In §366 I have emended the meaningless word מקליזכא (with variants) to the reading ימא קלי, "the burning sea," which is found in §496.

[42] Morray-Jones, "Transformational Mysticism," 24. Morray-Jones also mentions §420, in which R. Ishmael's hands and feet were burned away. One more text, this time in the *Ma'aseh Merkavah*, describes the transformation of a human being who ascends through the seven palaces. The speaker is R. Ishmael:

(§558) When I ascended to the first palace, I became pious. In the second palace I became pure. In the third palace I became upright. In the fourth palace I became faultless. In the fifth palace I brought holiness before the King of kings of kings, blessed be He. In the sixth palace I recited the Qedusha before Him who spoke and formed the world and commanded that all creatures be created, so that the attending angels would not destroy me. In the seventh palace I stood with all my vigor, but I

Conclusion

This paper provides detailed support for one aspect of a broader case made in my earlier article "The *Hekhalot* Literature and Shamanism" in which I argued that the experiences and praxes reported of the descenders to the chariot in the *hekhalot* literature have illuminating parallels to the experiences and praxes reported cross-culturally of shamans. The descenders to the chariot are chosen by shaman's marks found on their bodies; they gain supernatural powers through a personal disintegration and reintegration; by means of rigorous ascetic practices they generate ecstatic experiences (including otherworldly journeys) and gain control over the spirits; and they use their powers as leaders in their communities.

The focus in the present paper is the experience of personal disintegration and reintegration. We have explored passages in the *hekhalot* literature which describe the dangers facing the descenders to the chariot. They focus on the radioactive glory that emanates from beings in the celestial realm, most especially God. Mortals who wish to enter the heavenly throne room risk attack and immolation by the angels, but careful adepts can avoid harm through knowledge of the proper magical techniques. Nevertheless, the achievement of their main goal, to gaze directly at God, brings a danger to the descenders to the chariot that cannot be avoided. Even the righteous R. Ishmael found himself literally consumed by the experience. The sight of the figure of God on his throne brings about a personal disintegration that burns and rends its victim. But worthy mortals are transformed rather than destroyed by the ordeal. R. Akiva could walk in the heavenly rivers of fire and ride in a fiery chariot like the one that took Elijah into heaven. At least temporarily, he gained a divine nature something like that of Enoch, whose transformation into an angel was narrated as far back as the Second Temple period.

This disintegration and reintegration is strikingly similar to that experienced by shamans. They are eaten alive and regurgitated, stripped down to skeletons and rebuilt, or transformed into lightning, or starved and revived. They return from these ordeals as new persons with great magical abilities. Thus, the descender to the chariot, like the shaman, undergoes a personal destruction and resurrection as

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shook and shrank back in all my limbs, and I said . . . (a *merkavah* hymn follows). The transformation here is spiritual rather than physical, but it does seem to produce a change in the adept that protects him from hostile angels.

part of the process of gaining his power to function in the supernatural world.[43]

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[43] These conclusions raise the fascinating question of how Enoch's transformation into an angel would have been regarded in the Second Temple period. Space forbids a lengthy digression on this problem, but a couple of possibilities are worth noting. First, the Second Temple descriptions of Enoch's apotheosis could be purely fictional literature whose later reflexes served as a foundation myth of sorts in the *hekhalot* literature. That is, the visionary experiences attributed to the descenders to the chariot were interpreted in terms of the Enoch legend, even though historically there is no connection between the groups that produced the two bodies of literature. Alternatively, it is not impossible that shamanistic groups in the Second Temple era drew on their own religious experiences in describing Enoch's ascent, and that the *hekhalot* literature was written in circles that developed more or less directly from these apocalyptic groups. Much work remains to be done on this problem, and it will not be solved soon, if ever. In *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, Himmelfarb argues that both the Second Temple apocalypses and the *hekhalot* literature are pure fiction, without any basis in visionary experience; whereas Morray-Jones, in "Transformational Mysticism," seeks to establish a line of descent from Second Temple apocalyptic to the *hekhalot* literature. A revised and expanded version of this article appears as chapter five of my book *Descenders to the Chariot: The People Behind the Hekhalot Literature* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming), which presents a comprehensive case for comparison of the *hekhalot* literature with shamanism.

SACRIFICIAL THEMES IN JEWISH MAGIC

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One of the most promising developments in recent scholarship on magic in the ancient world is the discovery that rituals that have been called magical can be described no less accurately as adaptations of sacrificial systems.[1] This insight is well suited to the Greco-Roman world, where a domestic cult had always existed and presented no conflict with the "official" municipal cults. But the relevance of this finding extends beyond Greco-Roman polytheism. For, as we shall see, the histories of magic and sacrifice are intertwined.

For evidence, one need only walk the streets of contemporary Jerusalem, where the ancient Jewish sacrificial cult infuses the iconography of popular religion, divination and magic. Objects depicting the ancient Temple and its accouterments flourish in shops selling religious objects. Not only do messianically oriented religious movements sell pop-up paper models of the Second Temple for children to assemble, but objects related to the Temple and its cult are sold as agents of good fortune. One striking example is a shadowbox, meant to hang in a house or a shop, displaying a model of the breastplate of the High Priest in the Jerusalem Temple as depicted in Exodus 28-29. The model of the breastplate is inlaid with semi-precious stones according to the manufacturer's interpretation of biblical terms. The shadowbox acts both as a reminder of the potency of the ancient priesthood as a symbol of redemption, and as a talisman. Each stone encodes a separate tribe of Israel and at the same time offers a specific benefit for the owner. This artifact has its roots in an ancient tradition of esoteric Jewish gemology, and in ancient exegesis and poetry depicting the Temple cult in Jerusalem.[2] We can certainly

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[1] See below, notes 8 and 9. My thanks to Sarah Iles Johnston for her suggestions on matters relating to this topic.

[2] For the esoteric gemological tradition, see Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion* (1932; repr. New York: Athenaeum, 1982) 136-38 and the excerpt from *Sefer Gematriot* printed on pp. 165-68; and Moritz Steinschneider, "Lapidarien, ein kulturgeschichtlicher Versuch," in George Alexander Kohut, ed., *Semitic Studies in Memory of Rev. Dr. Alexander Kohut* (Berlin: S. Calvary, 1897) 42-72. The antiquity of the tradition of interpretation of the breastplate is attested in the fifth-century liturgical poem *Az be-'En Kol*; see Joseph Yahalom, *Az*

ascribe this phenomenon to current political and cultural trends, but we should not forget the hold that the Jerusalem Temple and its sacrificial system have always had upon the popular Jewish imagination. At the same time, one also notices the proliferation of icons of charismatic Rabbis—posters and even trading cards depicting Rabbi Yitzhak Kaduri, a popular practitioner of "practical Kabbalah," the Lubavitcher Bebbe and others. To put these two phenomena in terms of the current debate about the nature of Late Antiquity, sacred place and sacred person both possess power.[3]

In fact, the connections between sacrifice and magic extend to intellectual history as well. The two phenomena have suffered similar fates in the history of scholarship. From the Reformation on, magic and sacrifice became battlegrounds on which the lines of demarcation between "true" and "false" religion were drawn.[4] As Jonathan Z. Smith has shown in his book *Drudgery Divine*, generations of historians of religion seeking to distinguish ancient Christianity from its neighbor religions have relied on Protestant polemics against Catholic conceptions of Eucharistic sacrifice—said to operate under the principal *ex opere operato*. In such polemics sacrifice and magic are identical—and both are bad.[5]

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be'En Kol: Seder ha-'Avodah ha-'Ereṣ-Yisra'eli ha Qadum le-Yom ha-Qippurim (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1996) 127-33, lines 583-634.

Cf also Baḥya b. Asher, "Commentary to Exodus 28:15-20 and Gen. 49," in Shimon Shevel, ed., *Rabbenu Baḥyah: Bi'ur 'al ha-Torah* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-rav Kook, 1966-67) 1:378-95; 2:296-302; and Abraham Portaleone, *Shilṭe ha-Gibborim* (Mantua; repr. Jerusalem, 1970) chs. 46-50 (fols. 44a-51a). My thanks to Adam Shear for this last reference. For a further discussion of this tradition, see Michael D. Swartz, "The Semiotics of the Priestly Vestments in Ancient Judaism" (forthcoming).

[3] CfPeter Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," in *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (London: Faber & Faber, 1982) 103-52; and Jonathan Z. Smith, "Towards Interpreting Demonic Powers in Hellenistic and Roman Antiquity," *ANRW* 2.16.1: 425-39; *idem*, "The Temple and the Magician," in *Map is not Territory* (Leiden: Brill, 1978) 172-89. One way of seeing this convergence of conceptions of the sacred is to look to the proliferation of ritual and charismatic activity surrounding the tombs of Rabbinic and modern Jewish saints in contemporary Israel. See Yoram Bilu, "Dreams and Wishes of the Saint," in *Judaism Viewed from Within and from Without* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) 285-313; *idem*, "Personal Motivation and Social Meaning in the Revival of Hagiolatric Traditions among Moroccan Jews in Israel," in Zvi Sobel and Benjamin Hallahmi, eds., *Tradition, Innovation, Conflict: Jewishness and Judaism in Contemporary Israel* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991) 47-69.

[4] See Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971); Francis Clark, *Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967; 2nd ed.).

[5] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparision of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) esp. 33-35, 45.

In modern biblical scholarship as well, the two have had an uneasy relationship. Early biblical scholars such as Yehezkiel Kaufman tried mightily to contrast biblical sacrifice with "pagan" sacrifice, which was said to operate under magical principles.[6] But reversing this trend, Baruch A. Levine, in his ground-breaking study *In the Presence of the Lord*, sought to show that magical concepts informed the rituals of the priestly authors of the Torah no less than their neighbors.[7]

For this reason, it is significant that contemporary scholars of Greco-Roman magic, including those represented in this volume, are inclined to see the rituals of the Greek magical papyri and related sources as expressions of a domestic or individualized sacrificial cult.[8] This insight has recently led to some fine and subtle analyses of sacrifices in magical texts.[9] In Judaism of late antiquity and the early middle ages as well, the connections between sacrifice and magic are substantial. This discussion will focus on how the image of the ancient sacrificial cult influences the literature of Jewish magic.[10]

1. *The Temple*

Sacrifice in the Jerusalem Temple was not only at the heart of Judaism from its beginnings to 70 CE, but it served a multitude of purposes.[11] The sacrifices served, in the priestly conception, to enable the palpable presence of God to come down to earth and bestow the blessings of an agricultural society on the land of Israel.[12] But what

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[6] For a concise version of Kaufman's argument, see Yehezkiel Kaufman, *The Religion of Israel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960). On the assumptions governing the study of sacrifice in earlier biblical scholarship, see the important discussion in Gary A. Anderson, *Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel: Studies in their Social and Political Importance* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987) 4-25.

[7] Baruch A. Levine, *In the Presence of the Lord* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) esp. 77-91.

[8] One forceful statement of this thesis is by Jonathan Z. Smith, "Trading Places," in Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, (Leiden: Brill, 1995) 13-27; see also the following note.

[9] See Sarah Iles Johnston, "Sacrifice in the Greek Magical Papyri," in this volume; and Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[10] For the term "magic" and how it is used in this work, see Michael D. Swartz, "Magical Piety in Ancient and Medieval Judaism," in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 167-83; and *idem*, "Scribal Magic and its Rhetoric: Formal Patterns in Hebrew and Aramaic Incantation Texts from the Cairo Genizah," *HTR* 83 (1990) 163-80.

[11] Useful surveys of the Temple and its functions can be found in Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978); and Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).

[12] See especially Baruch A. Levine, "The Presence of God in Biblical Religion," in Jacob Neusner, ed., *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of E. R. Goodenough* (Leiden: Brill, 1968) 71-87.

took place there was not only statutory sacrifice, but activities relevant to the everyday lives of the nation and ordinary people. As Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 1-2 demonstrates, people took their personal problems to the cultic sites. The Temple was the place where oracles were inquired, where women gave sacrifices after birth, and where a jealous husband could submit his wife to trial by ordeal.[13]

When the Temple was destroyed in 70 CE, a new class of leaders sought to redraw the terms of Jewish life, now bereft of its ritual center. The Rabbis argued that prayer, study, and performance of the commandments were effective substitutes for the Temple, and subsumed cultic wisdom into their broader scholastic system.[14] But the memory of the cult lived on—in synagogue iconography and poetry, in interpretations of Leviticus and related scriptures, and in the esoteric traditions. As Johann Maier, Martha Himmelfarb, Rachel Elior, and others have pointed out, concerns and motifs common to the Temple cult permeate the early Jewish mystical tradition.[15] So too, as we shall see, elements of the cult and its artifacts found their way into the magical tradition. This discussion will focus on two main topics: the place of the cult in the rhetoric of magical books and incantations, and the use of purity and cult in magical rituals.

It is worth noting that these two themes are *literary* motifs and not simply matters of ideology or praxis. We now know how important it is to pay attention to the literary features of magical texts. They can tell us how the authors used literary patterns, historiolae, promises and warnings, and ritual instructions for specific rhetorical purposes.[16] Rhetoric in magical texts is directed both at the entity to be

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[13] For a survey of these functions of the cult, see de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 2:457-67.

[14] On the attitude of the early Rabbis to the cult, see Jacob Neusner, "Map Without Territory: Mishnah's System of Sacrifice and Sanctuary," in *Method and Meaning in Ancient Judaism* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1979) 133-53; for Rabbinic statements on sacrifice and its replacements, cf. Naftali Goldstein, "*Avodat ha-Qorbanot be-Hagut Ḥazal she-le-Aḥar Ḥurban Bet ha-Miqdash*," *Daat* 8 (1982) 29-51; on how the idea of the presence of God in the Temple was treated in Rabbinic literature, see G. I. Davies, "The Presence of God in the Second Temple and Rabbinic Doctrine," in William Horbury, ed., *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) 32-36.

[15] See Johann Maier, *Vom Kultus zum Gnosis: Bundeslade, Gottesthrone und Märkābāh* (Salzburg: Otto Müller, 1964); Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Ithamar Gruenwald, "*Meqoman shel Mesorot Kohaniot be-Yeṣiratah shel ha-Mistiqah shel ha-Merkavah ve-shel Shi'ur Qomah*," in *Meḥqere Yerushalayim be-Mahshevet Yisra'el* 6 (1987) 65-120; Rachel Elior, "From Earthly Temple to Heavenly Shrines: Prayer and Sacred Song in the Hekhalot Literature and Its Relation to Temple Traditions," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 4 (1997) 217-67; Michael D. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic: Ritual and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) 171-72.

adjured or entreated and at the magician's social environment. On the one hand, the deity (or angel or demon) must be convinced that it is in his or her interest to answer the practitioner's request or demand. On the other hand, those taking part in the ritual must be convinced in the value and effectiveness of the ritual action and the power of the one performing it.

2. *Substitutes for the Cult*

We can see this dynamic in operation in the first motif under discussion: the notion found in Jewish magical texts that a particular ritual action can serve as a substitute for a corresponding ritual of the fallen cult. This idea finds explicit expression in two genres of magical texts: instructions preserved in magical manuals from the Cairo Genizah for an esoteric form of the biblical Sotah ritual, that is, a trial by ordeal of a woman suspected of adultery; and in introductory prayers that appear in Jewish divination texts.

2.a. *'Inyan Sotah*

We begin with a curious text from the Cairo Genizah entitled '*Inyan Sotah*, or "Concerning the Accused Woman." The text provides instructions for a contemporary equivalent to the ritual described in Numbers 5:12-31 for testing the so-called "wayward woman" (*sotah*), who is suspected by her husband of committing adultery. This text was published most recently by Peter Schäfer and Shaul Shaked, and has been discussed by Moshe Idel and Guiseppe Veltri.[17] The text,

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[16] On the value of literary and rhetorical analysis of magical texts, see Swartz, "Scribal Magic and its Rhetoric." Cf. also David Frankfurter, "Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *Historiola* in Ritual Spells," in Meyer and Mirecki, *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, 458-76, and *idem*, "The Magic of Writing and the Writing of Magic: The Power of the Word in Egyptian and Greek Traditions," *Helios* 21 (1994) 189-221.

[17] The text first appeared in A. Marmorstein, "Beiträge zur Religionsgeschichte und Volkskunde," *Jahrbuch für Jüdische Volkskunde* 25 (1924-25) 377-83. An excellent analysis is by Giuseppi Veltri, "'*Inyan Sota*: Halakhische Voraussetzungen für einem magischen Akt nach theoretischen Abhandlung aus der Kairoer Geniza," *FJB* 20 (1993) 23-48; cf. also Moshe Idel, *Golem: Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990) 61-63; and Peter Schäfer, "Jewish Liturgy and Magic," in Hubert Cancik, Hermann Lichtenberger, Peter Schäfer, eds., *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1996) 1:541-44, where a full English translation of the texts can be found. The edition used here is from MSS. JTSL ENA 3635.17 and TS K1.56 as published in Peter Schäfer and Shaul Shaked, *Magische Texte aus der Kairoer Geniza* 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994) 17-45.

which is almost certainly post-talmudic, is preserved in manuscripts from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

In the biblical ritual, the accused wife is to be brought before the Temple and administered a mixture of holy water and earth from the floor of the Tabernacle, which is then mixed with the ink with which the priest has written an imprecation. If she is guilty, the "water will turn bitter, her belly will swell and her thigh sag."[18] If she is innocent, she will not be harmed—indeed, she will carry her baby to term. This unusual ritual is the subject of a lengthy talmudic tractate; however, according to the Mishnah, the ritual fell out of practice at the end of the second-temple period.[19]

Our text provides a latter-day substitute for that ritual. The text begins with the kind of pedigree that can be called a magical chain of tradition.[20] This introduction concerns the divine names used for the Sotah ritual. According to the text, the names were written down by the legendary second-century sage Rabbi Ishmael as dictated by Metatron. This pseudepigraphic attribution is very common in mystical and esoteric Jewish texts of late antiquity and the middle ages.[21] The text then claims that:

> some of (the names) were revealed to Moses at Sinai at the (burning) bush and some were revealed to Elijah on Mt. Carmel and some were revealed to every prophet by Mesamriyah[22] who stands before the divine curtain, until the time of the Sanhedrins of Israel, who knew the seventy names [of God] and the name of purity and the name of impurity. They also knew every precept of ritual action.
> (MS. JTSL ENA 3635.17 fol. 17a lines 13-17)

The introduction therefore focuses on powerful divine names granted by an angel to the prophets and later sages. These are indentified with the Explicit Name (*ha-shem ha-meforash*) and the seventy names of

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[18] Num 5:27. This phrase may be an expression for abortion, implying that the husband suspected the wife because she was pregnant and believes that the child could not be his. See the discussion in Baruch A. Levine, *Numbers 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible 4; New York, Doubleday, 1993) 201-12.

[19] M. *Sotah* 9:9. See Judith Hauptman, *Rereading the Rabbis: A Woman's Voice* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998) 15-29. On the Mishnah tractate *Sotah*, see Jacob Neusner, *History of the Mishnaic Law of Women* (Leiden: Brill, 1980) part 4; and Adriana Destro, *The Law of Jealousy: Anthropology of Sotah* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).

[20] On this genre, see Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 173-205; and Frankfurter, "Narrating Power," *passim.*

[21] For a discussion of pseudepigraphy in early Jewish mystical literature, see Martin Samuel Cohen, *The Shi'ur Qomah: Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (Lanham, NY: University Press of America, 1983) 82-87.

[22] This is apparently the name of a certain angel.

God and the names of purity and impurity—magical traditions well known from talmudic and Jewish esoteric sources.[23] It was these very names that served as the efficacious element of the Sotah ritual. The text goes on:

> Know and understand that of these secret names, which are the Explicit Name, they would give the water to the Sotah to drink, and because of these names her belly would swell and her thighs would fall. These are the words with these names, which they would write for her: they are the Explicit Name, which the High Priest would recite in holiness and purity. (fol. 17a line 18 - fol. 17b line 3)

This passage is interesting both for its historiographic implications and its conception of the role of the divine name. The author introduces into his chain of tradition the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of Judea in the second-temple period. As Veltri points out, this inclusion has both a historiographic and a political meaning.[24] The most famous chain of tradition is that of the opening of the Mishnah tractate *Avot*, in which Torah is handed down from God to Moses, then to the prophets and second-temple Pharisaic sages, and finally to the Rabbis. In that chain of tradition the priests as a caste are notably absent.[25] In our text as well, the author wishes to include in his list of ideal figures the pre-Rabbinic sages, the forbears of the Rabbis of his day. But at the same time, he needs to do so precisely because of the priestly nature of the text. The Sotah ritual was one that required a priest and therefore reinforced priestly authority and power. By including the sages, the author balances that priestly authority with that of the sages. But more than this, he ascribes to those sages access to one of the same sources of holiness held by the priests: the sages, like the priests, knew the powerful magical names. As we will see, these names hold the key to freeing the Sotah ritual from the constraints of the Temple cult.

At this point the text lists those names, which were included in the text of the biblical imprecation that is mixed with the waters. Indeed, the author tells us, neither the water itself nor the earth from the

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[23] On the seventy names, see Joseph Dan, "The Seventy Names of Metatron," in *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies* Division C (1982) 19-23. The idea of the "name of impurity" appears in b. Sanhedrin 91a; see Veltri, "*'Inyan Sota*," 37-40.

[24] Veltri, "*'Inyan Sota*," 30-34.

[25] See Stephen D. Fraade, *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991) 70-71; Louis Finkelstein, *Mavo' le-Massekhtot 'Avot ve-'Avot de-Rabbi Natan* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1950) xxix.

Temple mixed into it contain bitterness. Rather, it is the text of the imprecation, with its divine names, which afflicts the guilty woman.

Turning to the present day, the author acknowledges that "we have no priest nor holy water nor sanctuary." Nonetheless, he informs us that there is:

> a way of performing [the ritual] that we do today. Know and understand that if a man fears heaven in this age, and cleanses his soul of sin and iniquity, and walks in the way of purity in his flesh, and attends to these names, and perfects his soul in these ways, he becomes like an angel and a high priest. He will not go forth empty-handed in anything he does. (fol.17d lines 1-8)

At this point the text gives the details of the ritual. The text alludes to the idea that the high priest is like an angel, an idea that goes back to Malachi 2:7 and continues throughout the second-temple and talmudic periods.[26] This idea has several ramifications. As the angels attend God on high, so the priests attend him in the sanctuary.[27] But as the human priest, unlike the angels, is made of flesh and blood, he must purify himself in preparation for encounter with the divine presence.

Now we see why it is necessary for the Sanhedrin to be in possession of the divine names. Two elements of the ritual, the earth from the Temple Mount and the holy water, are unavailable after the destruction of the sanctuary. But if the magical names are the potent ingredient of the ritual, and if they were held by a ruling body other than the priesthood, then they are available to the post-exilic magician who can perform them outside of the Temple.

But what of the holy water and the earth from the Temple? The text instructs:

> At the beginning of the procedure, instead of what the text says—"holy water" (Num 5:17)—you should take water flowing from a spring in a ceramic vessel. And instead of the earth from the Tabernacle, you should

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[26] See, for example, the Qumran Rule of Benedictions (1Q28b), 4/25-26 and Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 21:2; on the idea, see Joseph Yahalom, *Az be-'En Kol: Seder ha-'Avodah ha-Ereṣ-Yisraeli ha-Qadum le-Yom ha-Kippurim* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1996) 17, 123.

[27] This idea is dramatically illustrated in such texts as the Qumran Songs for the Sabbath Sacrifice, which depict arrays of angels performing heavenly sacrifices, as well as many Rabbinic tales of a heavenly temple and Michael, its high priest. On the Qumran Sabbath Songs, see Carol Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); on the idea of a heavenly Temple in Rabbinic literature, see Avigdor Aptowitzer, "*Bet ha-Miqdash shel Ma'alah 'al Pi ha-'Aggadah*" *Tarbis* 2 (1931) 137-53, 257-87; and Samuel Safrai, "The Heavenly Jerusalem," *Ariel* 23 (1969) 11-16.

> go to the synagogue and take earth from the four corners of the ark of the Torah.
> (fol. 17d lines10-15)

As Moshe Idel documents, there are several sources that ascribe creative power to the earth from the Temple.[28] That earth, called "virgin soil," was a key ingredient according to some medieval mystical texts for creating an artificial creature known as the Golem. Indeed, according to the early Rabbis, because Adam was created from the dust of the earth, soil has the power to bring a son to term in the biblical Sotah ritual.[29] Moreover, some related ritual texts concerning the substitute term "house of study" (*bet midrashekha*) for the Temple (*bet miqdashekha*). So too, the magical Sotah ritual substitutes the earth from the synagogue for the earth from the sanctuary. Our text thus represents the magician—that is, the reader who will follow these instructions—as the modern-day equivalent of the biblical priest. The synagogue also becomes the modern-day equivalent of the Temple; here it is the physical sanctity of the Torah scrolls contained in the ark that allow for this unusual substitution.[30] More importantly, the ritual itself fulfills what the author apparently saw as a vital missing part of the cultic system, the Sotah ritual.

2.b. *Divination Texts*

The idea that the magical ritual can serve as a substitute for a particular element of the Temple cult also appears in divination books found among magical documents from the Genizah and in printed editions.[31] These books usually include a prayer to be recited by the

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[28] Idel, *Golem*, 61-63. For Rabbinic legends linking the Temple to the creation of the world, see Raphael Patai, *Man and Temple in Ancient Jewish Myth and Ritual* (London: Thomas Nelson, 1947) 54-104.

[29] Idel, *Golem*, 62.

[30] On the development of the idea that the Torah scrolls make for the holiness of the synagogue as a sacred space, see Steven Fine, *This Holy Place: On the Sanctity of the Synagogue during the Greco-Roman Period* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997). On the synagogue and its relationship to the sanctity of the Temple, see Joan Branham, "Vicarious Sacrality: Temple Space in Ancient Synagogues," in Dan Urman and Paul V. M. Flesher, eds., *Ancient Synagogues: Historical Analysis and Archaeological Discovery* (Leiden: Brill, 1995) 2:319-45.

[31] The literature of Jewish divination remains largely unstudied, although dreams, astrology and certain individual divination procedures have received some attention. See, for example, Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic*, 208-29; Moritz Steinschneider, *Jewish Literature from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Century* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1967) 202-03; J. C. Greenfield and M. Sokoloff, "Astrological and Related Omen Texts in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic," *JNES* 48 (1989) 201-14; Israel Friedländer, "A Muhammedan Book on Augury in Hebrew Characters, " *JQR* (o.s.) 19 (1907) 84-103; Samuel Daiches,

practitioner before inquiring of the divination system. In the prayers preceding the oracles, the practitioner asks that God receive his request favorably. The following example is from one Genizah fragment, MS. TS K1.131.[32] This fragment is similar to the book *Goralot Aḥitofel*, "The Oracles of Ahitophel," which appears in several versions in manuscripts and printed editions.[33]

The prayer emphasizes that the petitioner will not use the oracles in order to "transgress the Torah and what is written in it," and expresses the hope that the community will be among those who hold fast to the Torah. Among other things, the petitioner asks to use the oracle because

> we have neither prophet nor priest to inquire of the Urim and Thumim. Therefore, I approach you and rely on your abundant mercy in inquiring of these oracles for every matter, to inform humanity of your ways; they[34] will thank you for all your works, whether good or bad, whether healing of sickness, whether deprivation or abundance, as it is written: "I shall raise the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord; I shall find trouble and agony, and call out the name of the Lord."[35]

Here the author explicitly states that the text's divination system can substitute for the Urim and Thumim in the Temple.

2.c. *Cult in Magical Ritual*

For the most part, this discussion has emphasized how the rhetoric of a magical text recommends a practice as a replacement for a Temple ritual. But we have also seen how the *'Inyan Sotah* ritual imitates the biblical ritual, substituting post-exilic elements for those of the Tem-

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Babylonian Oil Magic in the Talmud and in the later Jewish Literature (London: Jews College, 1913); Joseph Dan, "*Sare Kos ve-Sare Bohen*," *Tarbis* 32 (1963) 359-69; Gershom Sholem, "*Hakarat Panim ve-Sidre Sirṭuṭav*," in M. D. Cassuto, Yosef Klosner, Yehoshua Guttman, eds., *Sefer Asaf: Qoveṣ Ma'amare Mehqar* (Jerusalem: Mosad Harav Kook, 1943) 459-95; L. Wiesner, "Etwas über Kinderlosigkeit und Kinderreichtum im Talmud," *Jahrbuch für Jüdische Volkskunde* (1924/25) 73-79; and Ludwig Blau, "Lots," *Jewish Encyclopedia* 8:187-88.

[32] For the Hebrew text of this passage, see Michael D. Swartz, "*Pulḥan ha-Miqdash be-Sifrut ha-Magiah ha-Yehudit*," in *Pe'amim* 85 (2000), 670.

[33] A popular printed edition is edited by Meir Backal, who edits and publishes many divination texts for the general public; see his *Goralot Aḥitofel ha-Shalem* (Jerusalem: Backal, 1965); cf. *idem*, *Goralot Urim ve-Tumim* (Jerusalem: Backal, 1995) and *Sefer Pitron Ḥalomot ha-Shalem* (Jerusalem: Backal, 1965).

[34] That is, the community.

[35] Ps 116:13-14. The author here follows an interpretation of these two verses that sees them as syntactically linked. Cf. *Sifre ve-Etḥanan* 32 and Leviticus Rabbah 24:2.

ple. We turn now to a consideration of rituals themselves which echo the cult.

One common type of magical ritual recalls the cult in its relationship to specific elements of biblical ritual. These are preparatory procedures in which the practitioner is to purify himself by fasting, immersion, and avoidance of certain foods and of various types of sexual contamination. These rituals of purification appear in magical handbooks, especially in the introductions, in which the practitioner is instructed to prepare himself before using the entire book. The forms of purity in these texts can be seen as hyperextensions of the biblical purity system, in which the ritual actor must purify himself to an angelic degree.[36]

Occasionally, one of these rituals appropriates an element of the Temple cult itself. One Genizah fragment is apparently from a manual for reciting magical names according to times of the year. This text is apparently an instruction for a ritual in which the practitioner clothes himself, as it were, with the name of God. This idea is well attested in medieval Jewish magic.[37]

The text warns the reader not to incur the wrath of God, nor to use the magic for his own glory. The manual then instructs:

> You shall perform all of these (procedures) in the fear of God. Protect yourself well from any bad thing. And when you perform all of these (procedures) you should go out to the trough and say many prayers and supplications, and ask that you not fail again. Then speak this glorious name in fear and trembling. If you see the image of a lion of fire in the trough, know that you have succeeded wearing this holy name. Then you shall take the golden plate (*sis*) on which this holy name is engraved and tie it around your neck and on your heart. Take care not to become more impure when it is on you, lest you be punished. Then you may do anything and you will succeed.[38]
> (MS. JTSA ENA 6643.4 lines 4-13)

The purpose of the ritual is to "wear" the name of God, which will result in the practitioner's success in everything he does. When he goes to the trough, perhaps to water his cattle, he will see the image

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[36] See Michael D. Swartz, "'Like the Ministering Angels': Ritual and Purity in Early Jewish Mysticism," *AJS Review* 19 (1994) 135-67; idem, *Scholastic Magic*, 153-72; and Rebecca Macy Lesses, *Ritual Practices to Gain Power: Angels, Incantations, and Revelation in Early Jewish Mysticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 117-60.

[37] See Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken, 1954) 77, 368.

[38] For the Hebrew text of this passage, see Swartz, "*Bet ha-Miqdash*."

of a lion of fire in the water. This figure reminds us of the lions' heads that appeared on the Cherubim in Ezekiel's vision.[39]

The key ingredient in this ritual is an object called a *ṣiṣ*—a gold plate on which the divine name is engraved. In the Bible, the term refers to the gold frontlet, a strip of gold engraved with the divine name that the High Priest wore on his forehead when he served in the Temple.[40] In the Talmud, that frontlet is said to be an agent of expiation which affects atonement for sacrificial transgressions.[41] In magical texts, the term refers to a metal amulet or lamella.[42] Thus, as the priest's frontlet was considered to be an agent of ritual effectiveness in the Temple sacrifice, the gold plate in our ritual carries with it its own potency. While the magician cannot become the High Priest, he takes on some of the priest's power, vested in him by virtue of the name of God engraved on gold and worn on his person. As in the magical Sotah ritual, the divine name is what allows the magician to transfer sanctity from the realm of the Temple to the realm of post-exilic ritual.

One of the most striking types of sacrificial ritual found in Jewish magical texts remains to be explored: rituals in which an animal is actually killed. For example, in *Sefer ha-Razim*, a white rooster is slaughtered, its blood is mixed with flour for cakes, and its blood is also used for ink;[43] the blood of a fowl is used elsewhere in Jewish magical texts for writing incantations.[44] Even more dramatic is the slaughter of a lion cub, also in *Sefer ha-Razim*.[45]

These prodecures resemble similar rituals in the Greek magical papyri.[46] But whereas there the ritual can be placed on a continuum with the Greco-Roman domestic cult, there was no such cult to speak

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[39] Cf. Mordecai Margoliot, *Sefer Ha-Razim: Hu' Sefer Keshafim mi-Tequfat ha-Talmud* (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1966) 6:32, in which the image of a lion is to be engraved on a ring; and chapter 1, lines 136-40, in which the blood of a lion recalls the terror to be felt by the inhabitants of a city whom the practitioner wishes to intimidate; cf. below, on the sacrifice of a lion.

[40] Exo 28:36; 39:30; Lev 8:9.

[41] B. *Yoma* 7a-b.

[42] Cf. *Sefer ha-Razim* chapter 1, line 135, in which a *ṣiṣ* is to be inscribed with the blood of a lion and buried; and chapter 6, line 30 (cf. n. 39, above), in which a gold lamella is inscribed and placed in a ring to ensure safety in war or escape.

[43] *Sefer ha-Razim* chapter 1, lines 160-69.

[44] See, for example, MS TS K1.117 (Geniza 16) page 7, line 2, published by J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Magic Spells and Formulae: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1993) 174-81.

[45] *Sefer ha-Razim* chapter 1, lines 119-21.

[46] See Johnston, "Sacrifice in the Greek Magical Papyri."

of in Judaism.[47] In fact, unlike the rituals described above, these domestic sacrifices are lacking in symbols of the Jerusalem Temple. These cryptic rituals thus reflect a complex set of influences, associations, and methods of operation, and deserve a separate treatment.[48]

2.d. *Conclusions*

What can we learn from this material? First of all, we see more clearly some of the territory that magic and sacrifice share. For example, each deals with the most physical aspects of religion; each is concerned with dispelling demonic forces and attracting divine beings. Yet, there are at least two elements that make each ritual a specifically magical appropriation of the Temple ritual. One is the power of the magical divine name, an indispensable feature of Jewish magic. The other is how the magical ritual, by virtue of that name, makes an exclusive cult—limited to only a few acres on earth and performed by a small aristocracy—available to all who are in possession of its secrets.[49] Moreover, in affecting the transition from Temple to magical ritual, the practitioner also shifts his focus from the collective concerns of the Temple cult to the concerns of the individual.

Returning for a moment to the streets of present-day Jerusalem, we can take account both of the pop-up model of the Temple and the Rabbi trading cards. Sacrificial elements in Jewish magic serve these two conceptions of holiness—sacred place and sacred person. By preserving the memory of the Temple, the magicians recall sacred place. But at the same time they transfer its sanctity to anyone who holds the magic, thus allowing all who practice it to become powerful persons.

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[47] Compare, however, the ritual for *kapparot*, a ceremony for the expiation of sins before Yom Kippur in which a rooster is slaughtered by a householder. On this popular practice, see Jacob Z. Lauterbach, "The Ritual for the Kapparot Ceremony," in *Studies in Jewish Law, Custom and Folklore* (New York: Ktav, 1970) 133-42.

[48] On these rituals, see further Michael D. Swartz, "Understanding Ritual in Jewish Magic" (forthcoming).

[49] That is, it is available, at least, to all Jewish males. Many of the rituals described here are accompanied by instructions that the practitioner is to avoid contact with women; cf. Swartz, *Scholastic Magic*, 162-65. However, the *kapparot* ritual was sometimes practiced by women who would use a hen, rather than a rooster, for expiation.

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PART FIVE

GREEK AND ROMAN ANTIQUITY

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THE ETHNIC ORIGINS OF A ROMAN-ERA *PHILTROKATADESMOS* (*PGM* IV 296-434)

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In the early 1970's an extraordinary magical ensemble was discovered in Egypt and purchased by the Louvre: a clay jar containing an inscribed lead tablet and a clay effigy of a naked and kneeling woman, whose hands were bound behind her back and whose body was pierced with thirteen bronze needles.[1] Scholars quickly realized that the text inscribed on the lead tablet was very similar to that found in an elaborate recipe preserved in a Greek magical handbook (*PGM* IV.335-406) and that the clay figurine had been treated in a manner that was also very close to instructions given in the opening lines of the same recipe (lines 296-304):

> Marvelous love-binding spell (*philtrokatadesmos*): Take wax [or clay] from a potter's wheel and make two figures, a male and a female. Make the male in the form of Ares fully armed, holding a sword in his left hand and threatening to plunge it into the right side of her neck. And make her with her arms behind her back and down on her knees ....

The handbook then directs us to inscribe parts of the female effigy with special magical words, pierce it with thirteen bronze pins, and then tie both figurines to an inscribed lead sheet and place the whole apparatus beside the grave of a man who was untimely dead or violently killed. The parallels between the Louvre ensemble and the rite prescribed by the handbook are indeed impressive, but one must also be careful to mark the differences: the Louvre figurine was found

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[1] P. du Bourguet, "Ensemble magique de la période romaine en Égypt", *Revue du Louvre* (1975) 255-57; idem, "Une ancêtre des figurines d'envoutement percées d'aiguilles, avec ses compléments magiques, au Musée du Louvre" *MIFAO* 104 (1980) 225-238; W. Brashear, "The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey, with Annotated Bibliography (1928-1994)" *ANRW* II 18.5 (1995) 3416-17. I use the following abbreviations throughout:

DT = A. Audollent, *Defixionum Tabellae* (Paris 1904).
PGM = K. Preisendanz [and A. Henrichs], *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*[2] (Stuttgart 1973-1974).
SM = R. Daniel and F. Maltomini, *Supplementum Magicum*, 2 vols., Papyrologica Coloniensia 16.1 and 2 (Opladen 1990 and 1991).

Unless otherwise indicated, the number that follows these abbreviations refers to a text in the collection, not to a page.

without an Ares figure, without any of the prescribed inscriptions on its surface, and in a clay pot, a detail not mentioned in the papyrus handbook.

Since the publication of the Louvre ensemble, two sets of paired statuettes of Ares and a kneeling woman have appeared in an antiquities auction in Paris: in the first, a pair modeled in wax, Ares is clearly marked with a helmet of lighter colored wax and his hand is resting on the shoulder of the woman kneeling before him; in the second set, a terracotta version, the needles are inserted in spots very different from the Louvre figurine and the papyrus recipe.[2] Such wide variations in the fashioning of the images should warn us from the outset, then, against privileging any single example. There are, moreover, even greater variations in the text of the incantation which, in addition to the long version found in the handbook, appears on no less than five other lead tablets, all dating between the second or third century CE and all probably found in Egypt.[3] Although two somewhat shorter texts closely parallel (as far as they go) the *logos* preserved in *PGM* IV,[4] two other tablets of very similar date show considerable variations (e.g. one has unique metrical additions) and were found sealed together (but without any effigies) inside a clay pot that was inscribed with a shorter, altogether different kind of love charm.[5] A fifth version of the text, now at the Kelsey Museum in Michigan, uniquely preserves the latter part of the *logos* found in the handbook (*PGM* IV 406-33), although it exhibits considerable variation as well.[6] We have, in short, evidence for a popular and very elaborate magical ritual that was performed repeatedly in Roman Egypt in a tradition that allowed great freedom of execution.

Although all of these texts clearly bear witness to the same traditional spell, I emphasize the differences between them, since previous scholarship has repeatedly privileged the Louvre ensemble and the *PGM* recipe as the most important witnesses for this tradition, and has in some cases treated them as the lynch pin in arguments about

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[2] Brashear (n. 1) 3417 n. 152.

[3] D.G. Martinez, *A Greek Love Charm from Egypt*, P. Mich. XVI (Atlanta 1991) 131-32, describes the various texts in detail.

[4] The lead tablet found with the Louvre figurine, and another one unearthed at Hawara in the Fayum which has two holes in it, presumably for attaching two figurines. For the latter see: C.C. Edgar, "A Love Charm from the Fayoum" *Bulletin de la Société Royale d' Archéologie d' Alexandrie* 21 (1925) 42-47 and *SM* 46.

[5] The two lead tablets and the pot were inscribed by or on behalf of the same person and target the same victim Matrona. See D. Wortmann, "Neue Magische Texte" *Bonner Jahrb.* 168: (1968) 56-111; D.R. Jordan, "A Love Charm with Verses" *ZPE* 72 (1988) 245-59 and *SM* 49-51.

[6] Martinez (n. 3) provides the *editio princeps* (= *SM* 48).

the ethnic origins to the entire ritual tradition. Pierre du Bourguet, for example, when he first published the Louvre ensemble, acknowledged the obvious Egyptian influence on the bound and pierced figurine sealed in the pot, but suggested in the end that the whole apparatus was best understood as a development within the Greek tradition of binding spells (*defixiones*).[7] Other scholars confirmed that certain aspects of the treatment of Louvre figurine were very reminiscent of native Egyptian rites of the Ptolemaic period, but ventured no opinion on the origins of the ritual itself.[8] Most recently, however, Ritner—again assuming that the Louvre figurine and the *PGM* recipe are the best witnesses to the original rite—has strongly argued for a purely Egyptian background for it:[9]

> Despite the Greek language of the text [i.e. the *PGM* recipe quoted above], the intrusive appearance of Ares, and the Roman date (third to fourth centuries) of both papyrus and figurine, the rite here described is not of Greek origin, but instead represents the culmination of an indigenous Egyptian tradition whose origins are contemporary with the creation of Egyptian civilization itself. The posture and material of the female figurine, and even the detailed attitude of the missing Ares figure, attest to a millennia old tradition from which they derive. To trace the development of this tradition, and the position of the Louvre figurine within it, one must first examine the techniques not of private but of royal magic, attested from the earliest remains of ancient Egypt.

Ritner assumes, of course, that the Ares figure is *inadvertently* missing from the Louvre apparatus and then goes on to trace the history of paired figures of Pharaoh smiting a bound prisoner in the royal magic of Egypt. Later on in the same study, moreover, he notes that the lead tablet found with the Louvre figurine addresses a corpse-demon by the name Antinoos and he concludes that the entire *logos* and indeed the whole Greek tradition of binding spells is "not Greek, but Egyptian, deriving from the ancient native custom of private 'letters to the dead'."[10] Finally, after discussing private Egyptian curses that

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[7] du Bourguet (n. 1) 234.

[8] M.J. Raven, "Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism" *OMRO* 64 (1983) 11 and C.A. Faraone, "Binding and Burying the Forces of Evil: The Defensive Use of 'Voodoo Dolls' in Ancient Greece" *CA* 10 (1991) 191 n. 94.

[9] R.K. Ritner *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, SAOC 54 (Chicago 1993) 113.

[10] Ritner (n. 9) 179-80. This was first proposed by A.H. Gardiner and K.H. Sethe, *Egyptian Letters to the Dead* (London 1928) 10, but has to my knowledge never been taken seriously until Ritner recently revived it. The theory is thoroughly discussed and dismissed by Sarah I. Johnston, *Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece* (Berkeley 1999) 90-94.

involve bound figurines and inscribed jars, he reiterates his disagreements with du Bourguet about the Louvre figurine, but along slightly different lines: "Designed as a prisoner, bound, pierced, enclosed and entombed with the dead, the Louvre figurine may now be seen to derive its 'magical mechanics' from a purely Egyptian milieu."[11] At this point, however, he makes no mention of any missing Ares' figure and focuses instead on the fact that the Louvre ensemble consists of a *single* bound figurine buried in a pot.

Although Ritner has confirmed the initial assessment of du Bourguet and Raven regarding the Egyptian origins of the posture of the Louvre figurine itself and its placement in a sealed jar, his more general conclusions about the indigenous Egyptian origins of the entire *philtrokatadesmos* ritual described in *PGM* IV and of Greek binding spells in general are misguided in two ways. The first is the alacrity with which Ritner moves from a perceptive insight about a single ritual detail to the more global assertions quoted above, without carefully considering the relationship of such details to the overall framework of the rite. The second methodological problem with his work in this area seems to stem, ironically enough, from his desire to correct similar errors by Preisendanz and other classicists who according to Ritner pushed for an untenable "pan-Greek" theory of origins.[12] Indeed, with regard to this *philtrokatadesmos* ritual he frames the problem of cultural origins oversimplistically as a choice between only two possibilities; for example, he is emphatic that the practice is *not* Greek *but* Egyptian or that it is *purely* Egyptian (my emphases). In taking such a limited and polarized view of cultural interactions in Roman Egypt, Ritner replicates the same, methodological flaw of the scholars he seeks to correct and similarly turns a blind eye to important and well documented influence from Semitic and especially Jewish sources.

In this essay I examine each of Ritner's specific arguments about the *philtrokatadesmos* spell, namely that: (i) the *logos* of this spell can be traced back to the Egyptian "letters to the dead", in which the petitioner addresses a ghost by name and asks it to take action against his

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[11] Ritner (n. 9) 183, where he mentions du Bourguet in n. 852.

[12] Ritner argues that Preisendanz and others repeatedly ignored the Demotic spells and the obviously Egyptian character of many of the *PGM* spells and assumed that the *PGM* were "inherently Greek *cultural* material, marred by intrusive 'barbarisms' typical of a syncretistic age"—see R.K. Ritner, "Egyptian Magical Practice under the Roman Empire: The Demotic Spells and their Religious Context" *ANRW* 2.18.5 (1995) 3359-62 (esp. p. 3360 for the quote above and the phrase "pan-Greek attitude"), where, unfortunately, he errs in the opposite direction in pushing an equally implausible "pan-Egyptian" origin for all of the Greek magical papyri. For a recent corrective, see F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Harvard 1997) 5.

or her enemies; and (ii) both versions of the *praxis* of this spell developed from Egyptian rituals, i.e. that (a) the handbook variation, which prescribes the manufacture of a *pair* of images, can be traced back to much older relief sculptures of Pharaoh striking his bound enemies; and (b) the burial of the *single* Louvre figurine in a sealed jug mimics much later, private Egyptian cursing rites. In what follows, I argue to the contrary that the spell under discussion is most likely a rich and very interesting amalgam of two originally separate Greek and Semitic practices, that made its way into Egypt sometime during the Roman era, at which point it was altered in some very minor, but interesting ways to accommodate local Egyptian practices and beliefs. Indeed, we shall discover that the two details that Ritner fastens upon, the address of the ghost by name (a feature of the "letters to the dead") and the act of sealing a single image in a jar (a common Egyptian practice) are actually non-standard practices within the family of texts and artifacts found in Roman Egypt itself. In other words, he is absolutely correct to see purely Egyptian sources for these two ad hoc details, but he errs in his wider conclusions that the entire ritual is completely Egyptian in origin.

The Logos*:*

In an appendix to his learned commentary on the Michigan lead tablet, David Martinez prints a hypothetical archetype for the *logos* of the *philtrokatadesmos* spell, which he creates by carefully collating the family of six texts described above and discovering which parts of the text all or nearly all of them share.[13] This archetype provides the best starting point for a discussion of the origin of the *logos*, as it gives us a much better idea about what earlier versions of the spell looked like. Indeed, we can begin to parse some of the ethnic contributions to this basic version of the spell by noting that the first section of the archetype shows very strong and obvious signs of Greek influence:

> I deposit (*parakatatithemai*) this binding charm (*katadesmos*) with you, chthonic gods, Pluto *uesemigadôn* and Kore Persephone Ereschigal and Adonis also called *barbaritha*, and Hermes Katachthonios Thoth *phôkensepseu arektathou misonktaik* and mighty Anubis *psêriphtha*, who holds the keys of the gates to Hades, and chthonic *daimones*, gods, men and women who suffered untimely death, youths and maidens, year after year, month after month, day after day, night after night, hour after hour.

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[13] Martinez (n. 3) 113-117. Earlier on p. 17, he gives a helpful chart showing how his archetype has been constructed.

The habit of inscribing a curse on a lead tablet and then depositing it in a grave with Pluto, Kore, Hermes Katachthonios and the "untimely dead" (*ahoroi*) are all immediately recognizable as parts of a traditional Greek ritual documented as early as the classical period in Sicily, Athens, Olbia and elsewhere.[14] It is especially important to note that lead is used commonly in many areas of Greece, like Athens, where it is regularly available as an off-product of silver mining and refining. It is not, however, native to Egypt and does not appear to be popular in pre-Hellenistic Egyptian magic. There are important details of language as well. The Greek verb *parakatatithemai*, for example, and other related terms of deposit are familiar in Greek *defixiones* from the late classical period onwards, as are invocations to Hermes in his role as Katachthonios.[15] The archtype of our *philtrokatadesmos*, moreover, openly calls itself a *katadesmos*, a term that Plato uses in the fourth-century BCE to describe the binding spells popular in Athens during his lifetime.[16] A recently discovered lead tablet of late fourth- or early third-century BCE date shows, moreover, that the early Greek use of this term is not limited to Athens: "Pausanias puts a binding spell (*katadesmos*) on Sime, daughter of Amphitritos...."[17] Thus we can see from the outset that the lead medium on which the *logos* is inscribed, its self-referential designation as a *katadesmos*, its other vocabulary, and its content are all attested as a coordinated assemblage in Greece prior to Hellenistic times.

The peculiar order and organization of the names of the various chthonic gods invoked on this tablet confirms the Greek origin of this

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[14] See C.A. Faraone "The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells" in C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink edd. *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York. 1991) 3-32, for the early date and diffusion of *defixiones*. D.R. Jordan, "Curse Tablets from Mytilene" *Phoenix* 52 (1998) 31-41, publishes new Lesbian texts dating to the late fourth- or early-third century BCE. Johnston (n. 10) 71-80 discusses the importance of deposit in graves and shows persuasively that as early as the classical period the ghosts of the restless dead are used as agents for Greek binding spells. On pp. 77-78 she quotes and discusses part of the *logos* under discussion to illustrate how it is a descendent of this Greek tradition.

[15] See: H.S. Versnel, "Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers" in Faraone and Obbink (n. 14) 99 n. 68 (for the verb *parakatatithemai* and related terms of deposit in Greek *defixiones*); Martinez (n. 3) 36-7 (discussion of the verb); and Faraone (n. 14) 3-6 (for invocation to the Hermes Chthonios), 9-10 (for the idea of a legal deposit or consignment of the victim to the underworld gods).

[16] *Republic* 364c, see Faraone (n. 14) 21 n. 3 for discussion.

[17] It was discovered on the island of Acanthus; for text, translation and discussion, see D.R. Jordan, "Three Greek Curse Tablets" in D.R. Jordan, H. Montgomery and E. Thomassen (eds.) *The World of Ancient Magic: Papers of the first International Samson Eitrem Seminar at the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 4-8 May 1997* (Bergen 1999) no. 3.

section of the *logos* and gives us some idea of its subsequent development. There are five groups separated by the connective *kai* ("and") which can be illustrated as follows:

... Pluto *uesemigadôn*,
and Kore Persephone Ereschigal,
and Adonis also called *barbaritha*
and Hermes Katachthonios Thoth *phôkensepseu arektathou misonktaik*,
and mighty Anubis *psêriphtha*, who holds the keys of the gates to Hades ...

The division and the sequence of these names is highly important, for it seems that in the first three cases, a Semitic name or a Semitic-sounding *vox magica* has been added *after* the Greek name without any connective at all just as if it were a gloss on it or a translation of it.[18] In the fourth case, the name Thoth and *phôkensepseu arektathou misonktaik*, an Egyptian-sounding series of magical words,[19] has similarly been added after the name of the Greek god Hermes Katachthonios, all of which suggests to me, at least, that this spell originally named a roster of four Greek chthonic deities: Pluto, Kore, Adonis and Hermes, and that at some later time the names of non-Greek gods were added, as a kind of foreign equivalent or translation of the original Greek names.[20] Note, too, that in the fifth position, Anubis stands alone, with an Egyptian sounding *vox magica* and mention of his possession of the keys of the underworld, another traditional Egyptian motif.[21] His name is not, like the others, placed there as an Egyptian equivalent of a Greek god, but rather as a completely new addition at the end of the Greek sequence, a strategy of accul-

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[18] According to the very helpful "Glossary of *Voces Magicae*" in Brashear (n. 1) 3576-3603, the word *uesemigadôn* is Hebrew for "That is: his name is great", Ereschigal is the Babylonian goddess of the underworld, and *barbaritha* is possibly Aramaic for "Arba has come"; or Hebrew: "Art thou Arba".

[19] The same three words appear, e.g. at *PGM* III (in a heavily Egyptian-influenced spell) and at LXVII 11-12 (as an epithet of Hermes Thoth; see Koenen, *ZPE* 8 [1971] 205). A variation of the first word (*phôkenseps*) has been explained as Egyptian for "der mit dem Schwert Geschmückte." See Martinez (n. 3) 43.

[20] Adonis may, however, be a special case. His worship was borrowed by the Greeks from the Levant in the early archaic period (Sappho mentions him) and his name derives from Semitic *Adôn*, "Lord". The Aramaic word that follows his name is not, moreover, simply placed after Adonis's name, as in the other cases in this passage, but rather it is linked with the Greek words *ho kai*, which is a regular Greek formula for adding a *supernomen* to the god's name, as Martinez (n. 3) 41 shows. We shall see below, moreover, that there is evidence that the original Greek list of underworld deities in this charm may have been limited to Pluto, Hermes and Persephone.

[21] According to Brashear (n. 18) *psêriphtha* may be Egyptian for "son of Re-Ptah." See Martinez (n. 3) 41-45, for all of the Egyptian motifs here.

turation that is observable in other cases where classical Greek texts are brought into Roman Egypt and then extended to make them relevant to their new cultural setting.[22]

It is interesting to note, in fact, that the invocation in the shorter Oxyrhynchus version of the *logos* is devoid of all of the Semitic and Egyptian material that we find in Martinez' archetype: "I deposit this binding charm with you, chthonic gods, Pluto and Kore and Persephone and the chthonic *daimones* ...." It looks, in short, very much like the Greek forerunner for the invocation that I have been suggesting. Here we might be tempted to ignore the puzzling separation of Kore and Persephone, were it not for the fact that we get the same division in an invocation of similar date and style on lead tablet from Alexandria:[23] "Hermes Chthonios *archedama phôchensepseu sarertathou misonkaitk* and Pluton *uesemmigadôn maarchama* and Kore Ereschigal *zabarbathouch* and Persephone *zaudachthoumar*." Here we see what is probably another early version with four Greek gods, each again glossed with a foreign name of Semitic or Egyptian origin.[24] Note that neither this lead tablet nor the Oxyrhynchus one mentions Anubis and his keys to the underworld or Adonis. Close analysis of the first section of the *logos* suggests, then, that this invocation with its

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[22] The most famous example is the case of a traditional fifth-century hymn (the so-called Erythraean Paean) that shows up in Roman Egypt, with an additional fifth stanza that explicitly mentions the Nile River and Egypt. See O. Weinreich, "Asklepios und Aegypten: Zum Paian aus Ptolemais" *Aegyptus* 11 (1931) 15-17 and (for a recent summation of all the pertinent bibliography) L. Käppel, *Paian: Studien zur Geschichte einer Gattung*, Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 37 (Berlin 1992) 189-206.

[23] *DT* 38 = *SM* 54, a puzzling text whose purpose has been debated—it is either a love spell, a curse or both. See the prefatory remarks in *SM*. The invocation quoted here is followed by an adjuration of the Jewish type addressed below in note 25: "I adjure you by the name of Gê Chthonia (= Chthonic Earth) *meuri môritharcoth*." Here the Greek divine name Gê Chthonia is similarly glossed with a following *vox magica*, the first part of which seems to be an epithet of Hathor which connects her with "the primal flood" (see the commentary in *SM* ad loc.)

[24] In each case the new *voces magicae* follow the same pattern of "ethnic glossing" that we see in the *philtrokatadesmos*. The word *archedama*, for instance, has been added to Hermes Chthonios' Egyptian *vox magica*, and although Brashear does not have *archedama* in his glossary (see n. 18), other names listed there that begin with *ar-* all seem to be translations of Egyptian names beginning with "Horus". Similarly, the name *maarchama*, which has been added to Pluto's Semitic name *uesemmigadôn*, does not appear in the glossary, but it seems quite close to other words there that begin with *mar-* and *mair-* and seem to be compounds with the Aramaic word "lord". To Kore Ereschigal is added the word *zabarbathouch*, which is quite similar to *zabarbath bathiaô*, magical words that appear in other heavily Jewish spells and are, according to Brashear's glossary (n. 18), Hebrew for "Dies mit den vier Buchstaben vom Jahwe." The meaning and linguistic origin of the word *zaudachthoumar*, which follows Persephone's name, are apparently unknown.

original roster of chthonic gods, most probably derives from a traditional Greek binding spell (*katadesmos*) to which first the names of Semitic deities have been added and then those of Egyptian deities.

The second section of the *logos* is addressed to a previously unmentioned "corpse-demon" (*nekydaimon*) and demands that it bind the victim so that she cannot enjoy any of the pleasures of life *until* she comes to the man who performs the spell:

> I adjure (*exorkizô*) all the *daimones* in this place to assist this *daimōn*. Rouse yourself for me corpse-demon, whoever you are, whether you are male or female, and go into every place, into every quarter, into every house, and bind Ms. so-and so, whom Ms. so-and-so bore, you have her *ousia*, for me Mr. so-and-so, whom Ms. so-and-so bore, so that she not submit to vaginal intercourse, not submit to anal intercourse, not do anything for the pleasure of another man, except for me alone, Mr. so-and-so, whom Ms. so-and-so bore, in order that Ms. so-and-so be unable to eat, to drink, to resist, to be strong, be steady, or to get sleep apart from me, Mr. so-and-so, whom Ms. so-and-so bore.

We should note from the outset that Martinez' archetype addresses an unknown corpse ("whoever you are, whether you are male or female"), not a familiar one as in the case of the Egyptian "letters to the dead." The focus of this section, moreover, on the prevention of various activities, sexual and otherwise, is quite similar in form to the "vow of renunciation" or "vow of abstinence" which in Greek and Semitic cultures appears in both conditional self-curses and in imprecations directed against others.[25] This is the form of Achilles' famous promise: "But until then (i.e. until I take revenge for Patroclus' death), neither drink nor food will pass down my throat," a vow that is repeated nearly a millennium later by Paul's enemies, who "put themselves under a curse, declaring that they would neither eat nor drink until they killed Paul."[26] This type of formula becomes extremely popular in Roman-era Greek erotic charms, where instead of being directed at oneself in a vow, such strictures are forced upon the victim by means of the harassing *nekydaimon*. The recently discovered

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[25] In this paragraph, I closely follow D.G. Martinez, "May she neither eat nor drink ...: Love Magic and Vows of Abstinence" in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki (edd.) *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden 1995) 335-360, esp. 344-45, who carefully distinguishes "vows of abstinence" (in which someone places themselves under a curse *until* they do something) from "self-curses" (in which someone places themselves under a curse *after* they do something). Both are in fact conditional curses, the former designed to force a desired action while the latter aims at preventing an unwanted action. In his exhaustive study Martinez makes no mention of any pre-Hellenistic Egyptian parallels for such vows of abstinence.

[26] *Iliad* 9.209-10 and *Acts of the Apostles* 23:12.

lead tablet from Acanthus (mentioned earlier), proves—as had long been suspected—that *defixiones* employing this form of the "vow of abstinence" ("let Ms. X not do Y until she comes to Mr. Z") were used for erotic purposes at a much earlier date than had previously been attested: "Pausanias puts a binding spell (*katadesmos*) on Sime, daughter of Amphitritos... and neither let her be able to touch a victim sacrificed to Athena nor let Aphrodite go sweetly for her, until Sime embraces Pausanias."[27]

The third and final section of the *logos* continues on to adjure the corpse-demon, but in a different manner (by the name of an all powerful deity) designed to ensure the swift compliance of the *nekudaimon*:

> Because I adjure (*exorkizô*) you corpse-demon, by the dreadful and frightful name of the one at the sound of whose name the earth will open, at the sound of whose name the *daimones* tremble fearfully, at the sound of whose name the rivers and the seas are thrown into disorder, at the sound of whose name the rocks are split. Whether you are male or female, I adjure (*exorkizô*) you, corpse-demon, by *barbarathan cheloumbra barouch adônai* and by *abrasax* and by *Iâo pakeptôth pakebraôth sabarbaphaei* and by *marmaraouôth* and by *maramarachtha mamazagar*. Do not disobey my commands, corpse-demon, but rouse yourself for me and go into every place, into every quarter, into every house, and bring me Ms. so-and so, whom Ms. so-and-so bore.

The formula *exorkizô se kata ton deina* "I adjure you by so-and-so" first shows up in the Greek magical tradition in North Africa during the first century CE, presumably by way of Jewish rituals used to "exorcize" evil demons out of sick patients.[28] Although implied threats,

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[27] Jordan (n. 17), who dates the text to the late fourth or early third century BCE. For the importance of this new spell, see Faraone, *Ancient Greek Love Magic* (Harvard 1999) 53-55. The stipulation that she not touch a sacrificial animal or that a deity be well disposed toward someone is common in Greek curses, see Versnel "May he not be able to sacrifice...: Concerning a Curious Formula in Greek and Latin Curses," *ZPE* 58 (1985) 247-69. They are designed to force the victim to do something by interrupting their harmonious relations with the gods, and thereby (presumably) threatening their livelihood and happiness. See Martinez (n. 25) 349 n. 52, for Jewish example of a vow of abstinence that includes a ban on participation in religious cult.

[28] See Martinez (n. 3) 69-73 and R. Kotansky, "Greek Exorcistic Amulets" in Meyer and Mirecki (n. 25) 243-77, who points out the clear parallels between two heavily Jewish recipes for exorcism in *PGM* IV (1227-64 and 3007-3086), a series of first-century CE Greek *defixiones* from North Africa with obvious Semitic influence (e.g. *DT* 241.23ff: "I adjure you by the god above the sky, the one sitting over the Cherabim") and an early papyrus love spell from Egypt that has affinities to the *philtrokatadesmos* under discussion (*PGM* XVI. 9-10: "I adjure you, *nekydaimon*, by Adônaios Sabaôth ... cause Serapion .. to pine and melt away out of passion ... until Serapion ... comes to Dioskorous" (date: 1st century CE).

such as "at the sound of whose name the daemons tremble fearfully" are a feature of Egyptian magic as well, the mention of rivers in the *plural* should give us pause as this seems to be an idea foreign to Egypt, at least, a country that had only one celebrated river.[29] But if there was any doubt as to the Jewish origins of this part of the *logos*, the strongly Hebraic character of the magical names should put it to rest.[30]

We can see, therefore, that each of the three sections of Martinez' archetype seems dependent on Greek and/or Semitic models:

(i) the first section is taken over directly from the Greek tradition of *defixiones* and the invocations to the original chthonic gods have apparently been extended at some later date by Semitic and then Egyptian glosses;

(ii) the second section is clearly a development of a "vow of abstinence" kind of curse, that is a feature from quite early on of both Semitic and Greek cultures, but which—as far as we can tell—seems to have been first applied to erotic spells in Greece;

(iii) the third section is most strongly influenced by Semitic exorcistic rituals that we know were combined with Greek binding spells at least as early as the first century CE in North Africa.

It seems clear, then, that in the case of the *logos*, at least, Ritner is wrong to assert a uniquely or thoroughly Egyptian origin for a spell whose overriding influences are Greek or Semitic.

Let me close this section by specifically addressing Ritner's arguments: he claims that the naming of the corpse-demon as Antinoos on the lead tablet that accompanies the Louvre figurine reflects the Egyptian practice of naming the recipient of the "letter to the dead." I agree completely, but it turns out that only two of the six extant versions of this *logos* name the corpse-demon: the Paris tablet and the shorter Oxyrhynchus tablet which as we saw seems otherwise to be the *least* Egyptian of the whole family of spells. In the latter case, however, as Daniel and Maltomini have stressed, Kamês, the name of the *nekydaimôn*, has been squeezed in above the line as an after-

[29] Compare, e.g., an early Egyptian parallel to these types of threats quoted by Martinez (n. 3) 71: "If his name is pronounced on the border *of the river*, then it will dry up." This is the translation of J.F. Borghouts, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* (Leiden 1978) no. 127, with my added emphasis on the singular river.

[30] Martinez (n. 3) 76-83, gives an exhaustive commentary.

thought.[31] This a clear signal that the naming the corpse was *not* part of the original recipe (thus Martinez rightly excludes it from his archetype), but rather that it was twice added as an on-the-spot improvisation which probably *does* reflect local Egyptian practice. Ritner, however, extrapolates wrongly from this non-traditional detail and asserts: (i) that the Egyptian "letters to the dead" are the direct antecedents to this particular spell; and more globally (ii) that all Greek binding spells are derived from Egyptian practice. I see a very different historical process at work, for it seems much more likely that in the Roman period native Egyptian magicians probably came into contact with this Greco-Semitic spell, saw it as something novel and added it to their own repertoire, customizing it by adding the names of the Egyptian gods as glosses to the names of the Greek chthonic deities and in two cases (at least) adding the name of the deceased person perhaps to draw this foreign spell into a closer analogy with the local Egyptian tradition of "letters to the dead." The lesson to be learned here, of course, is that single, isolated details are less reliable indicators of primary cultural influence than parallels between larger assemblages or sequences of details, since it is very easy for a later redactor or copyist insert a single detail—indeed in the Oxyrhynchus text Kamês, the name of the corpse, was literally squeezed into the text above the line—than it is to reconfigure long stretches of text.

The Praxis*:*

Let us now turn to the *praxis* of this spell as narrated by the *PGM* recipe and as can be reconstructed from the scant archaeological evidence that accompanies the few lead texts found in situ. As we have seen, Ritner makes two claims about the ritual apparatus used with the *logos* discussed above: (i) that the ritual described in the *PGM* recipe—the creation of a bound and kneeling female abused by a standing male—is purely Egyptian and very ancient in origin, going back to dynastic sculptures of Pharaoh striking a bound enemy; and (ii) that the burial of the Louvre effigy alone in a jug reflects later and more private Egyptian execration rites. Du Bourguet and others had already acknowledged the debt that the Louvre figurine owes to

[31] See the editors comments on *SM* 37, where they cite other examples of naming the *nekydaimon*, but concede that it was not the usual practice. In the Oxyrhynchus text (*SM* 50, line 12) the scribe did not even bother to alter the standard text which stresses the anonymity of the *nekydaimon*: "... *whoever you are*, Kamês." The scribe who inscribed the text that accompanies the Louvre effigy, however, was more sophisticated: he deleted the phrase "whoever you are" when he added the name of Antinoos the *nekydaimon*.

Egyptian cursing rites, and this has indeed never been a controversial point (see notes 7 and 8). Ritner's assessment of the *original* Egyptian influence of the iconography of Pharaoh smiting his enemy on the *PGM* spell is equally uncontroversial, but here once again the wider conclusions that he draws seem unwarranted. I shall show below that the Greeks, beginning in the late archaic period, did indeed copy these paired images, but that they altered them in two very significant ways: they frequently made one or both of the paired effigies *female*, something that does not occur in Egypt, and they begin to connect this practice with specific mythological narratives about Ares and Aphrodite that show up in the Roman-period on a series of magical gemstones which depict Ares in full armor leading away a bound and naked Aphrodite. These gemstones, moreover, seem to have been used for precisely the same purpose as the *philtrokatadesmos* ritual under discussion (i.e. the erotic subjucgation of a woman), and they suggest that although such two-figured scenes may eventually be traced back to the royal magic of dynastic Egypt, in their peculiar form in the *PGM* handbook—Ares threatening a naked female—they have a chronologically nearer and thematically more significant origin in the Greek tradition of erotic magic.

I begin my exposition, as Ritner does, with the familiar scene of the Egyptian pharaoh smiting a foreign prince (figure 1). The figure of the pharaoh is larger than his enemy and stands over him grasping his hair with one hand and an uplifted mace or club with the other. The enemy, in stark contrast, kneels in a humbled position, trying to ward off the blow or perhaps supplicating the smiting pharaoh with his hand. Although the actual details of these traditional pharaonic scenes do not match the description in the *PGM* recipe of Ares "holding a sword in his left hand and threatening to plunge it into the right side of her neck," I think that Ritner is probably correct to trace the magical use of the paired images in the *PGM* spell to this well known Egyptian scene. His further claims, however, for a pure and direct line of Egyptian influence on these images cannot be sustained.[32] In the first place, there is clear evidence that this type of two-figured scene arrives in the Greek world in the form of Egyptian and Phoenician artifacts as early as the 8th century BCE and begins to show up in the iconography of Greek art as early as the sixth century. In his apparently eye-witness description of the famous Chest of Cypselus, for example, Pausanias describes the scene of "a good-looking woman punishing (*kolazousa*) an ugly one, choking her with one hand and with the other smiting her with a rod (*rhabdos*). It is

[32] See note 9.

Dike who does this to Adikia." His explicit identification of the two figures as Dike ("Justice") and Adikia ("Injustice") probably is prompted by inscriptions on the chest itself to which he refers elsewhere.[33] Nearly a century ago it was recognized that a small amphora in Vienna portrays a nearly identical scene in which the figures are again clearly labeled as Dike and Adik[i]a.[34] Since the surface of the vase is worn and does not reproduce well, I provide in figure 2 a copy of a nineteenth-century drawing of the painting. The iconography of the vase painting—especially the posture of Adikia—is plainly derivative from the Egyptian tradition, although in the Greek painting there is no difference in the size of the figures and Dike grabs her victim by the throat not the hair.

Scholars often assume that this vase painting, which dates stylistically to about 520 BCE, is simply a copy of the scene that Pausanias describes on the famous Chest. There are, however, minor differences which urge caution: the figure of Dike in the extant vase painting holds an ax or a mallet not a rod, and her victim's skin is covered with dotted circles, which as Frel points out, recall the tattoos on the bodies of Thracian women depicted elsewhere on Attic vase paintings.[35] I should note that since Herodotus reports that only Thracians of the highest birth tattooed their bodies (5.6), we might read this image even more specifically as follows: a Greek aristocratic lady justly punishing an upper-class Thracian one. This is, on the one hand, very close to the ideological stance of the Egyptian images of Pharaoh preparing to strike a foreign prince, whose ethnic origin is sometimes denoted by a distinctive headdress or by stereotyped racial features. On the other hand, the use of females instead of males indicates that already in the late archaic period Greek artists have made a decisive departure from their Egyptian model. Whatever its ideological origin,[36] this allegorical scene of Dike striking Adikia

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[33] Pausanias (5.18.2). See H. Stuart Jones, "The Chest of Cypselus" *JHS* 14 (1894) 69 n. 67.

[34] For bibliography, see J. Frel, "Dike and Adikia" in R.F. Willets *et al.* (edd.) *GERAS: Studies Presented to G. Thomsen* (Prague 1963) 95-98; H.A. Shapiro, "The Origins of Allegory in Greek Art" *Boreas* 9 (1986) 4-23, esp. 6-7, and idem, *Personifications in Greek Art: The Representation of Abstract Concepts 600-400 B.C.* (Zurich 1993) 39-44. *LIMC* s.v. "Dike" no. 3 (additional bibliography in Addenda 151). Shapiro, 39 n. 25, notes that the *iota* of Adikia's name is missing and that the earliest transcript of it (Brunn) gives *epsilon* not *alpha* as the final letter. The inscription is no longer visible on the vase.

[35] Frel (n. 34) 95 n. 4.

[36] The precise nationalistic ideology lying behind the Greek image (if in fact there is one) is not as obvious as in the Egyptian, especially since some Athenian aristocrats had long and very profitable relations with the Thracians and their silver mines. In

seems to have been very popular in the Greek world, for within a century paired figures in similar poses show up again and again in Attic vase paintings, especially in scenes where the *just* action or revenge of a character seems to be stressed, for example in images (such as that in figure 3) of Theseus justly killing the villain Procrustes with his own mallet, where the grasping of the hair and the turning and supplicating figure of Procrustes seems to reflect the Egyptian scenes closely.

Ritner has rightly and quite eloquently stressed how the Egyptian tradition of the smiting Pharaoh bridged the boundaries of magic and ideology, since it both publicly advertises the superiority of Egyptian military might over its neighbors and at the same time magically ensures that such dominance will continue.[37] Although the putatively Thracian tattoos on the figure of Adikia suggest some political or ideological vector in the Greek tradition of such images, we do not get any inkling of this second performative or magical aspect. We do, however, find it in an extraordinary inscription, which suggests that the Greeks were also capable of blending propaganda and magic in a paired set of images of this sort. The text dates to the first-century BCE and contains a hexametrical oracle that had in all likelihood been issued by the pan-Hellenic sanctuary of Apollo at Clarus on the western coast of Turkey. In this oracle, Apollo gives advice to the people of Syedra, who were apparently plagued by the incessant attacks of pirates or brigands:[38]

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his article on the vase Frel (n. 34)—followed by Shapiro (n. 34)—argued that the scene was an allegory that dramatized the longings of an Athenian painter during the difficult final days of the Pisistratid tyranny. If Frel is correct, then we might suspect that the painter has taken the image from an earlier monument that contrasted Greeks and barbarians and cleverly reused it to equate some party at Athens with the Thracians. According to this interpretation, the painting was an essay in wishful thinking: "If only Dike would triumph and punish the wicked tyrant".

[37] Ritner (n. 9) 113-36, especially p. 115: "Rendered tangible and permanent in stone, the image was designed not simply to reflect, but to create reality, guaranteeing by "sympathetic magic" the victory of the state and the gods." I completely agree, but see note 41 below for my preference for Tambiah's term "persuasive analogy" over the traditional Frazerian formulation of "sympathetic magic."

[38] G.E. Bean and T.B. Mitford, *Journeys in Rough Cilicia in 1962 and 1963*, Denk. Wien 85 (1965) 21-23 no. 26; F. Sokolowski, "Sur l'oracle de Claros destiné à la ville de Syedra," *BCH* 92 (1966) 519-22. L. Robert, *Documents de l'Asie Mineure Méridionale* (Geneva 1966) 91-100, and J. Wiseman, "Gods, War and Plague in the Times of the Antonines" in D. Mano-Zissi and J. Wiseman (edd.) *Studies in the Antiquities of Stobi*, vol. 1 (Beograd 1973) 174-79, attempt to redate the inscription to the reign of Lucius Verus using numismatic evidence; see E. Maroti, "A Recently Found Versified Oracle Against the Pirates," *Acta Ant.* 16 (1968) 233-38, for a good refutation of Robert, an article of which Wiseman was apparently unaware.

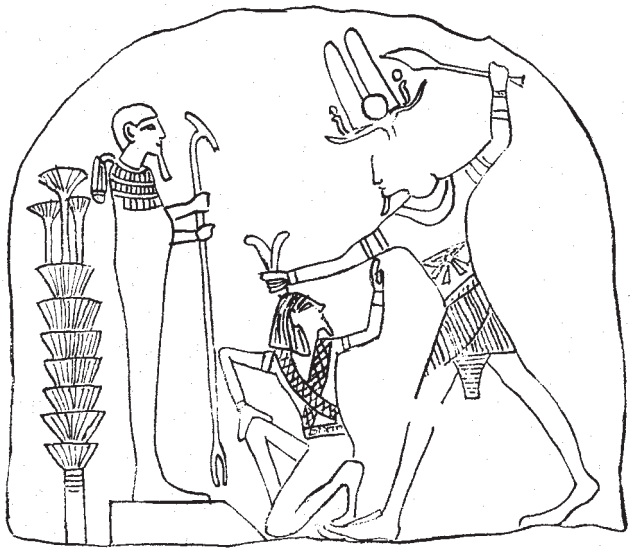

Figure 1 Standard Scene of Pharaoh Smiting an Enemy

Figure 2 Nikosthenic Amphora in Vienna (c. 520 B.C.E.)

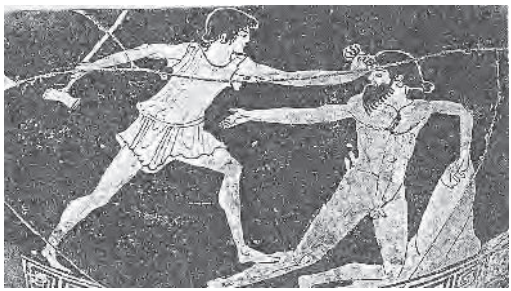

*Figure 3 Theseus Subduing Procrustes (*LIMC *no. 140; c. 470-460 B.C.E.)*

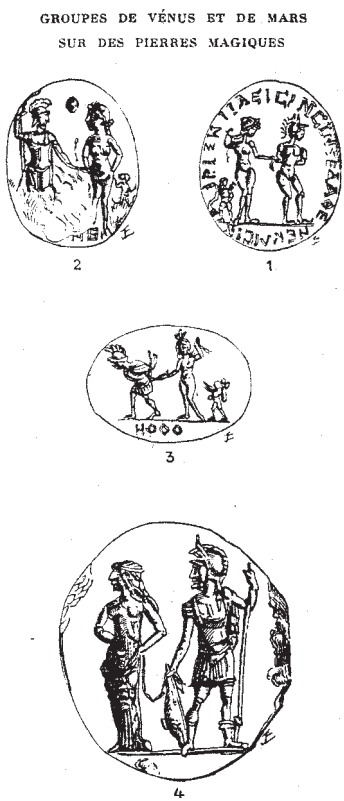
GROUPES DE VÉNUS ET DE MARS
SUR DES PIERRES MAGIQUES
2
1
3
4
I. MARS ENCHAINÉ PAR VÉNUS. Fig. 1 et 3.
II. VÉNUS ENCHAINÉE PAR MARS. Fig. 2 et 4.

Figure 4 Gemstones depicting Ares and Aphrodite

> Pamphylians of Syedra ... set up an image of Ares, the blood-stained slayer of men, in the midst of your town and perform sacrifices beside it, while holding him [sc. the statue] in the iron bonds of Hermes. On the other side let Justice (Dike) giving sentence judge him, while he himself is like to one pleading. For thus, after he has marched his unholy mob far from your native land, he will be peacefully disposed to you and will raise up much-prayed-for prosperity.

In this oracle, Apollo advises the Syedrans to erect in their town a statue of Ares bound and probably kneeling as the reference to supplication suggests.[39] The triumphant image is again of the female Dike who stands in judgment over him, most probably in a threatening pose.[40]

Regardless of the precise iconography of the figure of Dike, it is quite clear that this scene is very similar to the tradition of paired images under discussion and that it is expected to restrain and humble the hostile force of the pirates in some "persuasively" magical way.[41] It is, in short—as every commentator has agreed—a case of the magical use of images to influence the behavior of an enemy. Ares' relationship to the pirates is a bit unclear, but we do find evidence for a popular Greek belief that brigands and highwaymen in

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[39] The expression in the Syedran inscription ("while restraining him with the iron bonds of Hermes") need not mean that the god Hermes was actually depicted, but only that he was believed to have invented the shackles or that they were within his traditional sphere of activity (cf. the *Veneris vincula* in line 78 of Vergil's *Eclogue* 8; surely we need not suppose that Venus made an epiphany during the spell). For the interpretation followed here, see Faraone (n. 8) 168-70.

[40] The inscription describes Dike's pose with the verb *dikazein*, which usually means "giving judgment". The verb *dikaioun* (very similar in meaning to *dikazein*) can, however, in an Ionian writer like Herodotus (e.g. 1.100) mean "to punish", raising the possibility that Dike is to be envisaged as somehow physically punishing the bound Ares. If this is correct, we should probably imagine that Dike is to be depicted here in a menacing way with a sword or rod, as she, Nemesis and other avenging deities appear in some Hellenistic Greek paintings and later Roman imitations, such as the winged figure in one of the wall paintings at the Pompeian "Villa of the Mysteries." for an excellent discussion with illustrations and bibliography, see M.P. Nilsson, *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age*, Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen 8.5 (Lund 1957) 124-25.

[41] I use "persuasively" instead of the more traditional term "sympathetically". S. J. Tambiah, "Form and Meaning of Magical Acts: A Point of View" in *Modes of Thought* R. Horton and R. Finnegan edd. (London 1973) 199-229, rightly dismisses the common view that "sympathetic magic" is based on poor observation of empirical analogies. He distinguishes instead between the operation of "empirical analogies" (used in modern scientific discourse to *predict* future actions) and "persuasive analogies" used in rituals in traditional societies to *encourage* future action). For application of this idea to Greek rituals, see G. E. R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge 1979) 2-3 and 7, and Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses: Guardian Statues in Ancient Greek Myth and Ritual* (Oxford 1992) 117-21.

Anatolia and Thessaly were thought to be the special devotees of this god.[42] Similarly, Greeks on the mainland were accustomed to refer to their hostile barbarian neighbors to the North—be they Thracians, Gauls, Goths—as Ares himself or as the descendants of Ares.[43] In the Syedra inscription, then, there is a likely possibility that the brigands who are the target of this rite were unhellenized barbarians from the Anatolian interior. This suggests that there are two ways to "read" the statue group prescribed by the oracle: foregrounded by the Egyptian parallels, it would seem that the images were designed to restrain foreign enemies to the north, whereas if we compare it with the Greek scenes of Dike throttling Adikia or Theseus smiting the notorious highwayman Procrustes, the Syedran monument seems to be cast more as a solution to a local problem of law-and-order, an aspect that is not, in fact, absent from the traditional Egyptian reliefs. Indeed, the pharaoh was for the Egyptians the embodiment of justice, so we might say that the Greek adaptation of the scene preserves this idea, while separating the personified Dike from the body of the divine monarch, a figure that was never very popular in pre-Hellenistic Greece.

One might argue, of course, that the Syedran scene was borrowed by the Greeks directly from the Egyptians in the Hellenistic period—a period when, of course, the Ptolemies had great influence in the Eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, this use of a tableau of two figures in an ideological and magical monument designed to prevent the attacks of hostile enemies is very close in both content and purpose to the Egyptian figures of Pharaoh striking his enemies. There are not, however, any overt signs that it has been *recently* borrowed from the Egyptians. It is odd, for example, that Justice (Dike) is the triumphant figure here, not some figure directly representing the city of Syedra just as the Pharaoh represents Egypt. In fact I would argue that this statue group is tied much more closely to the earlier Greek appropriation of the Egyptian tradition in which the idea of Justice herself punishing criminals is above all stressed.

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[42] In the novel of Xenophon of Ephesus, for instance, Hippothoos and his band of robbers (*lêistai*) garland a wooden statue or Ares and prepare a peculiar form of sacrifice, which involves tossing a javelin at a hanging victim (13.1). G. Palmeyda, *Xénophon d'Ephese: Les Ephésiaques* (Paris 1962) 32 n. 2, suggests that the motivation for this type of worship here lies in Hippothoos' Thracian origins (2.1). In Apuleus' *Golden Ass*, the Thessalian bandits pour a libation and sing hymns in honor of Mars (4.22) and sacrifice an old male goat to him on an altar of green turf (7.5), a scene in which they are addressed as *deo Marti clientes*.

[43] Faraone (n. 8) 168-70.

These figures of Dike and Ares can also be connected in some interesting ways to a series of Greek rituals that at first glance may seem quite inappropriate for comparison: the use of pairs of images in private erotic love spells. Horace, a Roman poet roughly contemporary with the Syedran inscription, describes a pair of effigies used by the witch Canidia in a magical spell that apparently has an erotic conquest in mind: "There was a wax doll and a larger woolen one, which restrained the smaller with punishments (*poenis*), while it (i.e. the smaller, wax figure) lay there groveling, like a slave about to die."[44] Most commentators build upon the suggestion of a scholiast that the dominant, woolen doll represents the female practitioner (Canidia), while the smaller, wax figurine depicts some unfortunate male victim—a reading that seems to be corroborated by the use of woolen material to make the larger doll.[45] Scholars have, of course, adduced Canidia's effigies in connection with the *PGM* spell under discussion, pointing out how the goal of both spells—and the statue group described in the inscription from Syedra for that matter—is to equate the practitioners with the dominant figures and their victims with the subservient ones. Note, moreover, that in all three cases the gender of the triumphant figure is different from that of the victim, but that gender is not tied to the dominant or subservient role: a female figure dominates the scene at Syedra and in Canidia's spell, whereas a male figure is in the superior position in the *PGM* recipe.

The identification in the *PGM* handbook of the dominating male as "Ares fully armed" suggests, moreover, some connection to a particular Greek mythological narrative. Since Ares and Seth are often interchangeable in Roman-era texts from Egypt, one might argue that the name and traditional iconography of Ares here is simply a superficial Greek translation of an original Egyptian spell in which Seth, plays the role of the attacker. This line of argument is plausible, but it runs counter to centuries of Egyptian religious rituals in which the pharaoh is equated with Re, Osiris or Horus, while his enemies are assimilated to Seth, who along with Apophis, is regularly depicted in effigy and then ritually bound, cut up, pierced and otherwise abused.[46] In short: if the *PGM* rite develops (as Ritner supposes) *directly* from the Egyptian images of Pharaoh smiting his adversaries, we

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[44] *Satire* 1.8.30-33. For the Latin text and a detailed discussion, see Faraone "Clay Hardens and Wax Melts: Magical Role-Reversal in Vergil's Eighth *Eclogue*" *CP* 84 (1989) 298-99.

[45] The Greeks seem to have associated female flesh with wool; see Faraone (n. 27) 52 n. 53.

[46] Faraone (n. 8) 172-75 and Ritner (n. 9) 147-90 *passim.*

would expect Ares to be the *subservient* figure, not the dominant one. There is, moreover, the crucial problem of gender, since in the Egyptian rituals the smiter and the victim are always male. I would argue, in fact, that the name and iconography of Ares in the *PGM* spell are, in fact, important clues for understanding the more proximate origins of the scene, and that most Greeks when presented with a tableau of an armed and helmeted Ares threatening a bound and naked woman would have assumed that the female was Aphrodite, since the two appear together in similar antagonistic fashion on a series of Roman-era gemstones from various parts of the eastern Mediterranean outside of Egypt (see figure 4).[47] These gemstones, moreover, exhibit the same flexibility in the gendering of the dominant role that we have seen in the Greek and Roman texts discussed above: some depict a fully armed Ares leading a naked Aphrodite whose hands are bound behind her back, while others show the reverse—a fully clothed Aphrodite leading and whipping Ares, who is naked (except for his helmet), while Eros stands to the side holding Ares' sword and shield. Since examples of each of these carved gemstones carry an inscription of *voces magicae* or vowels that are typical of other magical texts, scholars are correct in their assumption that such scenes are not simply mimetic of some lost mythic narrative about these two divinities, but rather they were used as part of a persuasively magical ritual designed to bring about the power relationships depicted in these scenes.[48] There are, moreover, indications of a specific affinity of these images to the *PGM* spell under discussion: one of the gemstones with Ares triumphant bears a magic word, which also shows up at the

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[47] See M. Blanchet, "Venus et Mars sur les intailles magiques et autres" *CRAI* (1923) 220-34 and A. Delatte and P. Derchain, *Les intailles magiques gréco-égyptiennes* (Paris 1964) 239-44. For the connection between the iconography of these gemstones and our *philtrokatadesmos* ritual see Martinez (n. 49). It was made independently by Dr. Simone Michel, in a lecture given at the same symposium in London where I presented my own conclusions on the *PGM* spell (note 51 below). I was delighted to hear that she came to the conclusion that "the gem represents a radically simplified version of the essential elements of the *philtrokatadesmos* spell." Her findings will appear in an essay entitled "(Re)interpreting Magical Gems (Ancient and Modern)" in the conference proceedings to be edited by Mark Geller.

[48] See note 41 for "persuasive images" in Greek magic. For another example of such images used in erotic magic, see R. Mouterde, *Le glaive de Dardanus: Objects et inscriptions magiques de Syrie*, Mélanges de l' Université Saint-Joseph 15.3 (Beirut 1930) 51-56, who discusses a gemstone with Eros and Psyche in an erotic embrace on one side and Eros burning Psyche on the other, a design that is in fact described in recipe (*PGM* IV 1718-1870: "The Sword of Dardanos"), for a love spell cast by a man against a woman: (lines 1806-9): "Turn the *psyche* of Ms. so-and-so to me Mr. so-and-so, so that she may love me, feel passion for me ...."

very end of the *PGM* recipe that I have been discussing.[49] It would seem, then, that the gemstones with "Ares fully armed" were designed, like this more elaborate *PGM* recipe, for men seeking to attract and bind a woman erotically, while the gems with Aphrodite triumphant were designed for women to use against men.[50]

In the following chart I sum up the evidence for the Greek adoption and adaptation of the Egyptian tradition of these two-figured scenes:

	Dominant Figure	*Subservient Figure*
traditional Egyptian scene (down to Roman period)	larger pharaoh holds upraised weapon in one hand and grasps prisoner's hair with the other	kneeling prisoner is either bound or supplicates with upraised hand
Chest of Cypselus (6th Cent. BCE)	attractive Dike smites Adikia with a rod and chokes her	ugly Adikia
Vienna amphora (6th Cent. BCE)	attractive Dike holds upraised mallet in one hand and chokes Adikia with the other	ugly and tattooed Adikia kneels and supplicates with upraised hand
Theseus scene (5th Cent. BCE)	handsome Theseus holds mallet in one hand and grasps Procrustes by the hair with the other	naked Procrustes kneels and supplicates with outstretched hand
Clarian oracle (1st Cent. BCE)	Dike gives sentence and judges Ares	Ares in iron chains supplicates Dike
Horace *Sat.* 1.8 (1st Cent. BCE)	larger woolen effigy restrains smaller one with punishments	smaller wax effigy grovels "like a slave about to die"

[49] The so-called *iaeô-logos* also appears on two of the extant versions of the *philtrokatadesmos* under discussion, *SM* 48 and 49. Martinez (n. 3) 105-108, esp. 107-108, and Michel (n. 48) both discuss the importance of this link between the *PGM* recipe and the gemstones.

[50] Scholars postulate a similar use for the set of thematically opposed magical gemstones that either show Eros torturing a bound Psyche (used by men against women) or Psyche torturing him (vice versa). One of the striking things about these gemstones—especially in light of the important role that Dike plays in the Greek tradition of these two figured scenes—is their emphasis on the just nature of the binding or punishment, indicated by the inscription of the word *dikaiôs* ("justly so!") or the presence of the goddess Nemesis or her symbols. See n. 48 above and Delatte and Derchain (n. 47) 233-38.

Gemstones (2nd-4th Cent. CE)	Ares fully armed holds end of chain that binds Aphrodite's arms	naked and standing Aphrodite with arms bound behind back
philtrokatadesmos	Ares fully armed threatens to stab neck of female	naked and kneeling female is bound and pierced with needles

Despite the obvious differences in poses and weapons, I agree with Ritner that there are important similarites between the traditional Egyptian scenes and the two-figured scene described in the *PGM* recipe. Ritner argues, of course, that the canonical scenes from royal Egyptian magic are the *direct* source for the *philtrokatadesmos* ritual. The chart above suggests, however, that the *PGM* tableau is much more likely the result of a rather complicated process whereby the standard Egyptian scene is hellenized in the late archaic period in Greece and then develops independently in different directions. In the first instance, the dominant figure of the heroic god king is replaced by the Greek goddess Dike (Justice) who attacks and subdues Adikia (Injustice) or Ares (who represents the violence and mayhem of brigands). About a century later the pose is taken up by young male heroes like Theseus, who justly attack and subdue notorious evildoers and brigands like Procrustes. We have seen, however, that despite the moralizing stance of these earlier Greek adaptations (i.e. good triumphing over evil), we still find traces of the nationalistic themes in the Egyptian original: Adikia, for instance, is marked by tattoos as a Thracian and the bound Ares described in the Clarian oracle should most probably be connected with barbarian raiders from the Anatolian hinterland. There is, however, a second wave of Greek innovation, first attested in an Horatian satire, that pushes the Greek tradition even farther from its Egyptian roots: taken up into the field of erotic magic these two-figured scenes begin to emphasize the different genders of the figures and connects them for the first time with the popular Greek narrative of the stormy relationship between Aphrodite and Ares. In the light of this later Greek tradition, the name and iconography of Ares in the *PGM* recipe cannot be dismissed as a superficial and late replacement of an originally Sethian figure. Rather it is, by the fourth century CE, a central and important part of the Greek tradition of using pairs of figures, one male and the other female, to bind and attract erotically a member of the opposite sex.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by drawing together some general reflections about the very complicated ethnic backgrounds to this fascinating recipe in *PGM* IV. Ritner in his general analysis of both the *logos* and the *praxis* of this spell implicitly assumes that the pierced effigy in the Louvre and the text found with it were the most important evidence for this magical rite, and since there are some obvious signs of Egyptian influence on this apparatus, he assumed that this was true for the whole tradition of these spells and most especially the *PGM* IV recipe. My close analysis of the entire family of texts associated with these rituals reveals to the contrary that the names of Egyptian gods Thoth and Anubis and thier Egyptianizing *voces magicae* were most probably introduced secondarily into the amalgamation of this multi-ethnic spell and that the naming of the ghost in the text in the Louvre—Ritner's strongest argument for connecting the spell to the Egyptian "letters to the dead"—was probably an ad hoc invention that occurs only twice among the 5 extant spells and is absent in the *PGM* recipe itself. We have seen, moreover, that a similar distortion occurs in Ritner's treatment of the Louvre effigy, which was found sealed alone in a pot in a necropolis, without the figure of Ares stipulated in the recipe. He notes quite rightly that this treatment of a *single* magical effigy is a common form of private cursing ritual in Egypt, but then by extrapolating from this idiosyncratic variation of the *philtrokatadesmos* ritual, he ends up arguing wrongly that the entire series is wholly dependent on Egyptian models. On the other hand, he is probably correct to see the traditional Egyptian images of Pharaoh striking his enemy as the *aboriginal* source for the postures of the two figures in the *PGM* recipe, but a similar distortion creeps in because he seems to dismiss or ignore the important difference in gender between the two figures and the peculiarly Greek mythological narrative about Ares and Aphrodite. We have seen, however, that as early as the classical period, Greeks adopted this type of Egyptian iconography and hellenized it in three distinctive ways: (i) in the Classical period the dominating figure became associated with just action or the punishing of criminals and was often rendered as the female character Dike; (ii) in the late Hellenistic and Roman periods this use of paired figures was adapted for erotic spells such as in Canidia's ritual with the wool and wax effigies, with the crucial difference that the genders *must* be different; and (iii) around the same time these paired figures are connected with an important Greek narrative of erotic subjugation that was very oddly reversible: the armed and armored Ares leading a bound and naked Aphrodite or the reverse.

I should close by reiterating the caveat that I started with: each of these texts and images needs to be treated carefully in its own historical and social milieu, and when we attempt to trace out the various ethnic sources for and influences on a particular ritual we should abandon at the very start any notions of a "pure" or "single" ethnic pedigree for any magical spell in a collection as heterodox as the *PGM*. To paraphrase Jonathan Z. Smith, my colleague at the University of Chicago: the goal of an historian is not to simplify the facts but to examine and present them in all their wonderful complexity. We have known for some time now that the eastern Mediterranean basin from the Bronze Age down to the Roman period was the site of continual and very complicated cultural exchanges; therefore, if we are trying to explain the history of a series of magical rituals inscribed in the Greek language and buried in Egyptian soil during the Roman period, we need to eschew overly simplistic arguments of pure ethnic influence and try to imagine a much more complex historical process in which Greek, Semitic and Egyptian features have been combined, adapted and then recombined.[51]

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[51] Earlier versions of this paper were read at conferences at Claremont University (organized by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki) in August 1998 and at the Warburg Institute in London in June 1999 (organized by Mark Geller). I owe great thanks to the organizers and the audiences of the both conferences for their help and comments. A special thanks is due to Hans Dieter Betz, Roy Kotansky and David Martinez, who read and commented on earlier written drafts

SACRIFICE IN THE GREEK MAGICAL PAPYRI

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In this essay I would like to introduce two familiar axioms to one another.* The first is that sacrifice (which for the purposes of this paper I define as any offering made by a mortal to a non-mortal entity, including a god, a demon or a ghost) lay at the very heart of most ancient Mediterranean religions. Sacrifice was a *sine qua non* of establishing communication between mortals and greater powers, and thereby also vital to other interactions that relied on such communication. Sacrifice and its symbolic codes, moreover, helped to define religious acts and the parties who participated in them. "Normal" sacrifice helped to mark occasions and their participants as being "normal" themselves and conversely, "abnormal" situations or groups were marked by "abnormal" sacrificial procedures: the ancient Greek allegations that distant peoples such as the Taurians and Colchians practiced human sacrifice are well-known examples of this idea.

My second axiom is that magic and religion are difficult to distinguish from one another—if indeed they can be distinguished at all. Numerous attempts have been made both to establish and to reject their distinctiveness, using a variety of criteria. For the readers of this volume I need scarcely provide a list, but I would note that the criteria are almost always the same as those that, in the opinion of the scholar who has selected them, are definitive of religion or its role in society. Most famously, this is exemplified by Sir James Frazer's proposal that the religious individual piously worships the gods and the magician coerces them.[1]

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* I am grateful for the comments made in response to oral versions of this essay, particularly those of Philippe Borgeaud, David Frankfurter, Fritz Graf, Albert Henrichs, André Lardinois, Lisa Maurizio, Jean Rudhardt, Youri Volokhine, and Victoria Wohl.

[1] J.G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*. 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1911-36) vol. 1, 220-43. On the general endeavor of defining magic, cf. H.S. Versnel, "Some reflections on the relationship magic-religion" *Numen* 38 (1991) 177-97, the essays in Ch. Faraone and D. Obbink, eds., *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) and J.Z. Smith, "Trading Places," in in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki, eds., *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power* (Leiden, New York and Köln: Brill, 1995) (hereafter cited as Smith, "Trading") 13-27. I would note that, even if we reject the criteria used by many of the scholars who attempted to distin-

In light of my two axioms, it is surprising that virtually no attention has been paid to the roles that sacrifice plays in the rituals that we usually call magical.[2] Surely if we examine the way that sacrifice—the act most central to religion—functions within this body of rituals whose relationship to religion is problematic, we will understand that relationship better. Here I will begin to do that by looking at three examples of sacrifice from *PGM* IV, the Great Paris Magical Papyrus. First, however, I would like to lay down some guidelines with which I approach any study of rituals in the *PGM*.

To begin with, we should remember that each of the papyri in the *PGM* represents a *collection* of spells, brought together by a scribe to serve his own interests, in much the same way that one of us might collect recipes into a recipe file, borrowing them from cookbooks and friends as they strike our fancy.[3] The sources of the spells within any single papyrus may vary considerably, therefore, as may their cultural backgrounds. We should also remember that the rituals in these spells were more liable to adaptation than the rituals of traditional cult: because the practitioners who used the spells were independent contractors who worked outside of civically controlled cults and their rules (even if they were affiliated in some cases with local temples),[4] a

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guish magic and religion—as well as their underlying assumption that the two can ever be distinguished fully—the underlying approach itself has some virtues: if we are to understand a relationship between two phenomena, we must compare them, and if we are to compare them, we must identify their salient features and ask to what degree those features are shared.

[2] F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997) (hereafter cited as Graf, *Magic*) 231-32 and an unpublished paper entitled "Magical Sacrifice" delivered by Graf at the 5th International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult at Göteborg, Sweden (a résumé of which is forthcoming in the conference proceedings edited by Robin Hägg).

[3] D. Frankfurter, "Ritual Expertise in Roman Egypt," in P. Schäfer and H. Kippenberg, eds., *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium* (Leiden, New York and Köln: Brill, 1997) (hereafter cited as Frankfurter, "Expertise") 115-35 and idem, "Collections of Recipes," in M. Meyer and R. Smith, *Ancient Christian Magic. Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994) 259-62.

[4] Smith, "Trading," esp. 22-27, who emphasizes the fact that many details in the spells indicate the expectation that they will be performed in a domestic setting—the house of the client or of the practitioner himself as needed—and Frankfurter, "Expertise," who argues that in many cases the practitioners were priests of local Egyptian temples who, as their traditional roles as priests became eroded under Roman rule, increasingly functioned as local ritual experts, hired by individuals to solve quotidian problems. The willingness of the practitioners to adapt spells is demonstrated as well by the instances in the papyri where two different versions of a single *praxis* or *logos* are recorded side-by-side, sometimes with the advice that the user

practitioner who heard about, or developed, a better technique for accomplishing a particular aim could amend a spell just as we might amend a recipe after discovering that a different spice improves its flavor.[5] I do not mean to imply that a such a practitioner would have *ignored* the basic guidelines of established rituals, but rather that he would have felt freer to reinterpret them, and thereby to adapt the rituals he was using, than did the priests of long-standing, civically controlled cults. A good analogy for what I am driving at is the way in which the rhapsode of archaic Greece used myth. Each rhapsode drew on the same body of traditional myths when constructing his poems, but each adapted those myths freely to suit particular occasions or themes. A rhapsode who changed a story too significantly would surely have been censured (Achilles cannot be allowed to survive the Trojan War) but skillful changes within the proper limits enhanced his story and its ability to convey meaning.[6]

These observations have a further implication: unlike, say, scenes of sacrifice in individual books of the *Iliad,* the rituals within individual spells of the *PGM* can be used as *comparanda* for each other only to a limited extent. We must analyze each ritual largely in isolation, attempting to discern the possibly unique way in which it responds to traditional sacrificial ideology and structure in pursuing its particular goals. This is the reason that I will interpret just a few spells in detail

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adopt whichever works best for him or whichever includes readily available ingredients, e.g., *PGM* II.1-64, towards the end of which the scribe offers two variations of the final compulsive procedure; *PGM* IV.26-51, which gives two recipes for the eye ointment to be applied at the end (see further on this spell below, pp. 353-57); *PGM* IV.296-466, where an alternative name for the demon to be invoked is given at the end with the notation that the scribe found it in another spell; *PGM* IV.1275-1322: "I call upon you, the greatest power in heaven (others say "in the Bear")..."; *PGM* IV.2073-74, which refers to a variant *praxis* that the scribe did not choose to copy down; *PGM* VII.374-76 and 376-84, two different spells to induce insomnia, offered side-by-side; the numerous, slightly different methods of vessel divination offered in *PDM* xiv; and most famously, the three different versions of the "Book of Moses" in *PGM* XIII.1-734. Notable, too, is the tendency of scribes to aver that the procedure they are copying down has been tested and proven valid, which implies an atmosphere of experiment and comparison (e.g., *PGM* I.42-195, *PGM* XII.270-73, *PDM* xiv.117 and 424).

[5] See examples listed in the previous note.

[6] For example, as Homer's Achilles tells the story at *Il.* 24.602-17, Niobe assuages her grief with food before being petrified. Within the immediate story as narrated by Achilles the point of the change is to convince Priam to eat despite his grief; within the larger span of Homer's poem, the change serves to accentuate the theme that death is an inevitable part of human life and must be taken in stride (cf. S.L. Schein, *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad* [Berkeley and Los Angeles 1984] 161). I owe the rhapsode analogy to Victoria Wohl.

here, rather than offering generalizations about sacrifice in the *PGM* as a whole.

My second guideline is that we must remember that anyone growing up in an ancient Mediterranean culture would have had an instinctive awareness and understanding of ritual patterns. Although no one would have articulated these patterns in anything like the manner that we do as scholars, a lifetime of participation would have led the average man or woman to expect that, however much the details changed, proper rituals would follow certain lines. Thus, when we study the spells of the *PGM,* we should expect to find patterns that are familiar to us from our study of ancient religion, even if certain details seem odd for the reasons I mentioned just above. Finding those patterns is essential to understanding how, if at all, these "magical" rituals differ from religious rituals.

Corollary to this is my assumption that the practitioners of the *PGM* did not intentionally *reverse* normal ritual patterns or practices simply for the sake of reversal itself. It is true that as scholars looking at these rituals from the outside, we sometimes notice what look like reversals—the killing of animals not found in sacrifices to Olympian gods, for example, or the performance of sacrifices at night, or the consumption of sacrificial food alone rather than in a community—but I shall argue that the appearance of reversal or distortion is just an incidental effect, and that when a practitioner innovated upon an established ritual, he understood himself not to be reversing or distorting it but rather to be enhancing aspects of it that were particularly important, or extending what he understood to be its underlying ideology in a new direction.[7] To my mind, intentional reversal or distortion of rituals typically occurs in only three types of situations, none of which fit the circumstances under which the rituals of the

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[7] *Contra* Graf, *Magic*, esp. 229-32 (e.g., "In the course of this analysis, we have come across a number of those reversals that characterize magic and especially magical ritual—intentional inversions of everyday practices or ordinary ritual...the magician's isolation in the performance of the rite, the specific form taken by these rites and the role played by the infernal divinities...can be seen as so many reversals.") and idem, "The Magician's Initiation," *Helios* 21.1 (1994) 161-78 (hereafter cited as Graf, "Initiation,"), specifically 169-70. Cf. however, Graf's earliest publication on magic, "Prayer in Magic and Religious Ritual," in Faraone and Obbink as cited in n. 1, 188-213, esp. 195-97, where he also presents the magician as one who purposefully reverses or opposes ordinary (civic) religion, but at one point adds (p. 196) an important phrase (italics are mine): "...the magician who performs this ritual puts himself in opposition to the more frequent way of Greek ritual practice—*but not it should be underlined, to religion as such.*"

PGM were developed and performed. The first is a carnivalesque setting, which usually is associated with a period during which normal rules are rescinded. It is important to note that carnivalesque reversals and distortions almost always happen within a *public* context. The reversal or distortion is enacted in front of an audience—sometimes that audience is the actors themselves, sometimes it is the society at large. The practitioner of the *PGM* works alone or occasionally with a single person who acts as his assistant or apprentice:[8] his only audience is the gods and the demons upon whom he calls. Similar to the carnivalesque use of reversal and distortion are their somewhat more serious use as means of *mocking* or *criticizing* the *status quo*[9]—but here again, an audience or at least an expanded circle of participants is usually the case—otherwise, what is the point of the mockery?

Finally, reversals and distortions occur when a practitioner wishes to secure the help of an entity who opposes the god towards whom the rites are normally directed—it is the mark of the Satanist of popular imagination, for example, who believes that he pleases his master by mocking God with an inverted version of the Christian mass. Even here we might talk of audiences, in fact, since Satan, and perhaps also God, are expected to take note of what the Satanist does. Outside of a dualistic religious system, this third type of reversal or distortion is very uncommon precisely because there is no other "god" to whom a worshipper can turn—everyone in the society has to deal with the same pantheon of gods and demons and the only way that one can gain greater power, therefore, is by figuring out better ways to please, persuade or compel them. In a system that is not dualistic—as is the case in most ancient Mediterranean religions—it would be surprising to find a practitioner who profoundly changed what generations of his society had found to be successful methods of

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[8] Isolation of the magician: e.g., *PGM* I.130-32 and 192-94; III.616 and 693; IV.57, 734-50 and 850-56. The phenomenon is discussed by Graf, "Initiation," 166-67, but cf. also idem, "How to Cope with a Difficult Life," in P. Schäfer and H. Kippenberg as cited in note 3, 93-114, p. 103, where he changes his opinion.

[9] One instance of this from ancient Greece—the only one that I am aware of—was brought to my attention by F. Graf, who notes that Lys. fr. 5.2 mentions a group of Athenian young men who called themselves the *"kakodaimonistai,"* or "devotees of the evil daimon(es)," and met once a month at the time of the new moon to mock (*katagelô*) the gods and their laws. The new moon was traditionally the time at which Athenians took pains to appease and avert evil daimones (see S.I. Johnston, *Restless Dead: Encounters between the living and the dead in ancient Greece* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press: 1999)] [hereafter cited as Johnston, *Restless*] 60-61), thus these young men seem to have mocked society and its values by inverting them.

approaching the gods.[10] The slander spells of the *PGM* indirectly confirm this: the practitioner tries to defame another person and put him in the bad graces of the gods precisely by alleging that the person has reversed or distorted rituals.[11]

The first sacrifice that I will examine is from *PGM* IV.2891-2942. It is rather easy to interpret and offers a good, simple demonstration of the thesis that I want to test here. The first offering in the spell, which is made to the Star of Aphrodite, consists of pellets (*kollouria*) made of white dove's blood and fat, untreated myrrh and parched artemisia. One or more of these pellets are to be burnt on vinewood (lines 2891-95).

The ingredients of the pellets are meant to be pleasing. The dove is Aphrodite's favorite animal; myrrh smells good. Judging from its other uses in the *PGM*, artemisia also has positive connotations.[12] The offering aligns with standard practice therefore: to win a god's cooperation, one burns something nice. The spell varies from traditional sacrifice, however, in offering pellets that incorporate animal *matter*—the blood and fat of a dove—instead of offering that animal itself. This might well be a matter of efficiency: once he had manufactured them, the practitioner could store these pellets away until a client asked him to perform a love spell—to return to my cooking metaphor, it would be a bit like making a large batch of spaghetti sauce all at once and freezing individual portions for later use. The pellets would be economical, too: one could reap the benefits of sacrificing a dove for the cost of a pellet or two.[13]

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[10] European magicians of later times did deliberately reverse and distort Christian ritual in order to win the support of Satan and his demons—at least so far as we can judge from some of the documents they left behind (for example, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi Sacra and Profana*, ed. F. Miklosich and J. Müller six volumes [Vienna 1860-90] I 180 no. 79 and 343-44, no. 153; and A. Delatte, *Anecdota Atheniensia* I (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège 36 [Liège-Paris, 1927] e.g., 406. For further discussion, R. Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology* (Amsterdam, 1988) 255-57.

[11] E.g. *PGM* IV.2441-2621 and 2622-2707. Cf. Graf, *Magic*, 181-83 and S. Eitrem, "Die rituelle DIABOLH," *SO* 2 (1924) 43-61.

[12] Positive connotations: III.307, 332, 389, 703; IV.914, 1089, 1312, 2394; V.371; VII.223; 600, 999; VIII.72; XII.98, 398. In some other cases artemisia seems to function merely as a binding agent, for instance, in inks: I.245, II.17 and 35; IV.2143, 2237, 3200; 438 and 417. The single case where artemisia has a negative connotation is IV.2688, where it is an ingredient in a coercive offering.

[13] The making of pellets like these is is also found at *PGM* IV.1316 and 2682 and at *PDM* xiv. 93-114 (see esp. lines 98-100). Cf. also *PGM* IV.2441-2621 (see esp. lines 2457-70), where a mixture of animal parts and plants is made and stored away; small amounts are used as necessary.

If the pellets fail to persuade the goddess to cooperate, the practitioner has another trick up his sleeve: he will compel her to do so by burning the brain of a vulture (lines 2895-97). This is a familiar trick: elsewhere in the *PGM*, the brains of other animals are similarly used in compulsive procedures.[14] We cannot be sure *why* animal brains are used in these procedures[15] (nor, in this specific case, can we be sure why it is the brain of a vulture[16] rather than any other animal). Even so, the general outlines of the compulsive offering are clear: if pleasing things delight the gods when burnt, unpleasant things such as brains will make them uncomfortable and perhaps, therefore, will make them willing to cooperate with the practitioner lest he make them more uncomfortable yet. The *ideology* that underlies the procedure is traditional, and simply has been extended along logical lines: *all* materials can be burnt in order to send messages to the gods—unpleasant as well as pleasant.[17] The practitioner of our spell does not

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[14] *PGM* II.1-64 (brains of a black ram and an ibis), IV.1275-1322, VII.528-39 (brain of a black ram in both cases).

[15] We might begin to interpret the use of brains in compulsive spells by remembering that during the highest-quality method of mummification in the New Kingdom, according to Herodotus (2.86) as much as possible of the brain was pulled out of the skull through the nostrils peicemeal and any residue was rinsed out with drugs. Herodotus' description of the process has been confirmed by inspection of surviving mummies. As far as I can establish, neither Herodotus nor any other ancient source, Greek or Egyptian, mentions any process of treating or preserving fragments of brain, nor has any brain or brain material been found preserved in canopic jars. (Before the New Kingdom, the brain was simply allowed to dry up inside the skull of the mummy.) In short, the brain seems to have been considered superfluous material—something worthless or even undesirable, like the dung that the practitioner accuses others of burning in slander spells (e.g., *PGM* IV.2586 and 2651). Ancient Egyptian medical texts attach no importance to the brain and focus instead on the heart as the director of bodily functions. See S. Ikram and A. Dodson, *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt: Equipping the Dead for Eternity* (London 1998) 118; B. Brier, *Egyptian Mummies: Unraveling the Secrets of an Ancient Art* (New York 1994) 59-63, 91, 154, 262; C. Andrews, *Egyptian Mummies* (London 1984) 15-16; S.J. Fleming et al.,*The Egyptian Mummy: Secrets and Science* (Philadelphia 1980) 20; G. E. Smith and W.R. Dawson, *Egyptian Mummies* (1924; rpt. 1991) 67-68.

[16] We get a possible lead from other spells in which the brain of a black ram is used to compel the Sun-god. *White* rams are standard sacrifices to the Sun; by using the most offensive part of the inverse of the sacrifice that pleases the Sun, perhaps the practitioner tries to make things as unpleasant for the god as he can. By analogy, we might guess that vultures or the goddess with whom they were most often associated—Nekhbet—stood in some opposition to either Aphrodite or the Egyptian goddess with whom she most often was equated, Hathor, although I have not been able to confirm this.

[17] This point about compulsive fumigations was made also by Graf, *Magic* 230-31.

deliberately reject traditional practices, then; rather, he creatively extends them.

My second example, *PGM* IV.1390-1495 is entitled "Spell of attraction performed in the presence of [i.e., "with the help of"] heroes or gladiators or those who have died a violent death." The practitioner is supposed to save bread from his own meal, divide it into seven pieces and throw it out at a place where people have died violently, as an offering to their ghosts (lines 1390-95). Later in the spell, we learn that he also wishes to invoke the untimely dead when he throws the bread; the untimely were another type of restless dead, and thus like the violently dead, they would be particularly likely to help him (lines 1402, 1420).[18] While he throws the morsels of bread, the practitioner is to declare to the ghosts that he is giving them food leftover from his client's very own meal (line 1405)[19] and then ask them to haunt and torture a woman until she falls in love with his client.

One of two things normally happen when edible material is offered to non-human entities: either the mortal shares the food with the entities to whom he offers it by eating a portion *after* giving a portion to them, or he abstains from the food completely, giving all of it to them. In Greece and Rome, the latter practice is especially common when the entities receiving the offering are associated with the world of the dead. At first glance, then, our spell seems to invert normal rules: for one thing, the practitioner eats his portion *before* the recipients of the offering do, and for another, the practitioner is sharing the offering with them despite the fact that they belong to that group of recipients with whom offerings normally are not shared.

The ritual, however, is actually a combination of two older, well established practices. The first is that of dedicating any bits of food that fall on the ground to the dead. We first hear about this in fragments of Aristophanes' *Heroes* and Euripides' *Stheneboa* but it is probably a much older practice; it is frequently associated with the

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[18] On the use of the restless dead in magic, see Johnston, *Restless*, *passim* but esp. pp. 71-80.

[19] In other words, he is telling a bit of a lie, for reasons I cannot explain; it seems as if it would have been just as easy to ask his client to save some bread from a meal. Alternatively, we may be dealing with a text that combines two different versions of the same spell, in one of which the practitioner was to perform the ritual on his own behalf and in the other of which he was assumed to be working it on behalf of a client.

teachings of Pythagoras.[20] The practice varies the traditional choreography of formal sacrifice insofar as the recipient of the offering is consuming his portion of the food *after* those who are giving it have consumed their portions, but this is because these dedications are incidental offerings that occur by happenstance rather than formal, pre-planned sacrifices.

Interpretative emphasis should be placed on the establishment of *xenia*—that is, of a bond of friendship in which each party was expected to help the other—that inevitably occurred between any two parties who shared food, including the living and the dead. Ancient comments indicate that, already in the older cases of dedicating the fallen food to the dead, the idea was to use the food to reestablish or recall an existing bond of *xenia*: Athenaeus says that the morsels of food are intended for dead friends (*philoi*) and Euripides portrays Stheneboa as dedicating the fallen food to her beloved Bellerophon, whom she believes is dead.[21] In our spell, this bond is emphasized first and foremost by the practitioner's explicit declaration that the morsels come from his client's very own meal (line 1407) but it is also conveyed by his suggestion that his client, like the ghosts, is suffering:

> "[My client] has mixed leftovers from his own food with tears and bitter groans so that you, O luckless heroes who are confined in the NN place may bring success to him who is beset with torments. You who have left the light, O you unfortunate ones, bring success to him who is distressed at heart..." (lines 1405-1411)

The practitioner does not want to rely on chance in obtaining his dead accomplices, however—it wouldn't be good enough to use whatever ghosts might be hanging around his table when the crumbs fell. Indeed, if the ghosts were his friends, then he would want to *avoid* that situation, lest he impose onerous tasks upon them.[22] So the prac-

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[20] Ar. fr. 320 (ap. D.L. 8.34), Eur. fr. 664 (ap. Athen. *Deipn.* 10, 427e); Pythagoras: D.L. 8.34 and *Suda* s.v. *Pythagora ta symbola* § 235 and cf. Iamb. *VP* 126 where we find a variation of the idea. Pliny attests to another variation in Rome, whereby food that fell from the table was put back onto it but dedicated to the Lar (i.e., an ancestral spirit): *HN* 28§27. Brief discussion at E. Rohde, *Psyche* (London 1925 [1898]) 202 n. 114.

[21] The presence of this bond is reflected particularly in the fragment from Euripides cited in the previous note, where Stheneboa, believing her beloved Bellerophon to be dead, decrees that any food that falls on the ground should belong to him in particular. Athenaeus, quoting the fragment, specifies that the food usually is dedicated to dead *friends* (*philoi*).

[22] On the idea that the dead did not enjoy serving the living, and that one therefore would not wish to impose service on one's dead friends, see discussion at Johnston, *Restless*, 75 and n. 114, 78 and n. 128.

titioner chooses instead to carefully "create" leftovers that can be thrown on the ground and then take them to a place where he feels certain of contacting the sort of ghosts he desires. This brings us to the other age-old practice that our spell adapts: contacting the dead at their graves or at the places where they died. The deposition of curse tablets in graves is a well known example of this.[23] The story of how Epimenides cured a curse that was plaguing Athens is another: after using a magical technique to locate the places were people had once been murdered, he ordered sacrifices and other cultic acts to be performed at those spots to propitiate them.[24] Thus, our practitioner has combined techniques to garner the advantages of each: he wishes to obtain the help of the untimely and violently dead but wishes to do so not by coercing them, as many curse tablets do for example, but rather by winning their willing aid in a friendly manner. This is standard operating procedure in the *PGM*: practitioners almost always ask for the help of deities, demons and ghosts politely at first, offering them gifts in most cases, and keep rougher, coercive techniques only for emergencies.

When we looked beneath the surface of the two spells we have examined so far, we discovered that the practitioner had creatively extended the ideology of traditional sacrifice, but had by no means contradicted or reversed it. Things seem more complicated in some other cases, such as my next example, *PGM* IV.26-51, but even here we will find that innovation *within* standard patterns is the rule.

One of the first things we recognize in *PGM* IV.26-51 is a tripartite pattern that aligns with Hubert and Mauss' paradigm for sacrifice:[25] the practitioner enters a space that is considered sacred and set apart from the normal world—in this case, land that has been recently washed by the Nile, where no other mortal yet has trodden (lines 27-

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[23] On graves as the favorite place of deposition, see J. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (Oxford 1992) 18-19 and Graf, *Magic*, 127 (note: the translator of this English version has incorrectly written: "...most of our curse tablets come from tombstones..."; the earlier French and German versions of the book make it clear that Graf meant "...from graves," which is correct.

[24] Epimenides: D.L. 1.110 and see discussion at Johnston, *Restless*, 279-87. Cf. also the treatment of Pausanias' ghost at Plu. Mor. fr. 126 (Sandbach) = id., *Homerikai meletai* fr. 1 (Bernadakis) = schol. Eur. *Alc.* 1128, Th. 1.134.4-135, D.S. 11.45, Paus. 3.17.7-9, Aristodem. *FGrH* 104 F 8 and *Suda* s.v. *Pausanias* and discussion at Johnston, *Restless* 108-109.

[25] H. Hubert and M. Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function* (Chicago 1964; trans. of 1898 French) esp. Chapter Two.

29).[26] The practitioner kills a rooster while in this sacred space and then leaves the space again, emphasizing his departure by not turning around again once he is outside (lines 35-45).[27]

So far, so good: the spell as I have described it fits the paradigm perfectly. But we face a problem in line 41, where the practitioner is told to drink some of the rooster's blood as soon as it spurts from the rooster's decapitated body. Drinking blood is not part of sacrificial procedure in any of the ancient Mediterranean cultures that influenced the *PGM*—indeed, blood-drinking is prohibited in many of them. To understand the practitioner's actions simply as a sacrifice in the usual sense of the word, therefore, we would have to assume that he was being intentionally perverse for some reason—perhaps to alienate himself from the gods. This seems unlikely not only for the reasons that I mentioned earlier, but also because there is no sign elsewhere in the spell that the practitioner wishes to send such a message.

The timing of some of the other actions described in the spell also poses problems. After leaving the sacred space, the practitioner bathes and dons new clothes (lines 43-45). If our text specified a particular *type* of clothing, we might interpret this as marking a new rank or status into which the practitioner has entered, but as the text simply says *new* clothes (*kaina*) it seems easier to interpret the act of donning new clothes and the bathing that precedes it as one of puri-

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[26] Although it is significant that it is the untrodden bank of the *Nile* that has been chosen as the preferred place for the ritual, the underlying purpose of the choice is to provide the practitioner with a place that is pure and unsullied by previous human contact. Compare the technique of placing clean linen or sand or new bricks upon the floor of a room where a ritual is to take place, e.g., *PGM* IV.172-73 and 1860 and *PDM* xiv.62-63 and 283 (where the practitioner is supposed to use clean sand brought from the banks of the Nile *and* bricks).

[27] I note here an incorrect, and misleading, translation in the *GMPT*, which gives lines 44-45 as "...walk backwards out of the water, and, after changing into fresh garments, depart without turning around." As the translator, Hubert Martin, remarks in a footnote, the two instructions seem to contradict each other: if the practitioner walks away backwards, he will by necessity be turned around (i.e., be looking towards the place where the sacrifice was performed, which is to be avoided here, as in other cases in the *PGM* and in sacrifices to dangerous deities in general). But according to *LSJ*, the verb that Martin translates as "walk backwards" (*anapodizô*) means to "walk back," i.e., to return whence one came or to make another person walk back (e.g., Luc. *Nec.* 7, Hdt. 5.92ζ). This simpler translation obviates any problem. The same correction should be made to E.N. O'Neil's *GMPT* translations of *PGM* I.37 (and also to Graf's translation and interpretation of the spell at "Initiation" 168) and *PGM* IV.2493. In both cases, the verb again means simply to leave the place where a sacrifice was performed. R.F. Hock translates the verb correctly in *GMPT* for its single remaining use (*PGM* XXXVI.273).

fication. This seems strange, initially: normally, acts of purifications occur *before* one enters a sacred space or sacred time, not afterwards. The solution must be that the bath and the new clothes signal that the practitioner not only is departing from one state or activity as he leaves the area where the rooster was killed but simultaneously is entering into *another* state or activity, or at least another stage of the same state or activity. The bath and new clothes also imply that this new state or activity requires greater purity than the first one did.

The end of the spell will help to clarify what is going on as a whole. After he has left the place where the rooster was killed and has bathed and put on new clothes, the practitioner performs yet another act, the instructions for which consume a full twenty percent of the text (lines 45-51). He rubs his eyes with an ointment made from and applied with animal parts. This probably was intended to bring on a direct vision of some god, as similar ointments rubbed on the eyes elsewhere in the *PGM* explicitly are said to do this.[28] If so, then the bulk of the spell as we have it constitutes preparation for its real goal: namely the seeking of a vision at the end.

With this hypothesis in mind, let us look more closely at the rooster's death. First, we notice that the spell specifies that the practitioner must catch the blood he will drink with his own hand, as soon as it runs out of the rooster's severed neck (line 41). The touching and drinking of the dying animal's blood—a striking symbol of the vitality that is leaving its body—can be understood as an act that brings the practitioner into as close a contact with the essence or *pneuma* of the animal as possible. That close physical contact between the practitioner and the animal was important is confirmed by the spell's specific instruction that the practitioner kill the rooster by himself, alone, holding it between his knees as he beheads it (lines 38-40).

This emphasis on close physical contact suggests that we should take the title of the spell—*teletê*— in the sense that *teletê* and its cognates most often are used in the *PGM*. *GMPT* translates *teletê* as "initiation" but the essential meaning of the word is "completion," "fulfillment" or "perfection." When *"teletê"* and its cognates appear in the magical papyri, they most often mean "perfecting" in the sense of preparing an object for use in a ritual.[29] This is often accomplished

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[28] E.g., *PGM* IV.774-79, V.54-69, VII.335-47; *PDM* xiv.295-308, xiv.828-35, xiv.856-75, xiv.875-85, xiv.1110-29.

[29] Graf, "Initiation," 163-64. I am aware that even "perfection" and "perfecting" do not translate *teletê* and its verbal cognates completely; the sense of the Greek cannot be captured by any single English word. Nonetheless, I choose to use the closest English word available, rather than the Greek itself, in order to make this essay more accessible to non-classicists.

by bringing the object that requires perfection into contact with another object, frequently an animal whose life force then is caused to pass into it, as in the case of a spell where a stone is perfected by being buried for a day within the guts of a sacrificed rooster.[30] The practitioner's drinking of the rooster's blood should not lead us to interpret the slaughter of the rooster as a corrupted sacrifice, then; rather, it is a sacrifice that has been modified in order to "perfect" something, something that, once perfected, will be used in a subsequent procedure.[31] In this case it is the *practitioner himself* who is perfected, which makes sense because it will be the practitioner himself, with his own anointed eyes, who will see the god. The "tool" that the practitioner must perfect through contact with the rooster is his own body.[32]

What are we to make of the fact that the practitioner puts the remains of the rooster's body on the burning altar after he has brought himself into close association with its blood (line 42)? This

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[30] *PGM* XII.307-316. Cf. *PGM* XII.201-69, where a ring is perfected by being held in the smoke of burning birds that have been sacrificed, and IV.2889, where a phylactery is perfected by being dipped in the blood of a person untimely dead. Cf. also IV. 2145-2240, where a magical plaque is perfected in a process that includes sacrificing a white rooster (although it is not specified how the plaque and the rooster come into contact). In other cases, objects are perfected by having sacrifices performed in front of them (e.g., XII.14-95, perfection of a statue of Eros).

[31] The choice of animal is significant in this respect. The setting of the spell at sunrise suggests that it was a direct vision of the Sun himself that was sought; this is supported by the fact that there are quite a few other spells for making contact with the Sun in the *PGM* and by the centrality of the Sun, in either his Greek or his Egyptian *persona*, to many forms of esoteric as well as public cult during the Imperial Age, particularly as a god who could reveal hidden knowledge (e.g., *PGM* II.64-183, III.633-731, IV.475-829 [the "Mithras Liturgy"] and 930-1114). The rooster is the first creature to announce the rising of the Sun each day and thus could be understood as the animal who sees the Sun best; white roosters are a common offering to the Sun in other spells of the papyri (e.g., *PGM* II.64-183 [esp. 74-76], *PGM* III.633-731 [esp. 694-95] and cf. Procl. *CMAG* VI.150.1 and 15, where the rooster is connected with the Sun) and were considered sacred (*hieros*) to the Sun even as early as Pythagoras, according to one of his *symbola* (see *Suda* s.v. *Pythagora ta symbola* §235.) To be consecrated by the essence of the rooster, then, could be interpreted as being imbued with the power to see the Sun oneself.

[32] Analogous sequences (i.e., elaborate preparation of the practitioner's body and/or soul prior to the performance of a ritual that will result in the actual goal of the spell) occur elsewhere in the papyri. A particularly good example is *PGM* IV.154-285, where the practitioner undergoes a mock death, from which he emerges "armed with a magical soul" (*magikên psychên echôn hoplistheis*, lines 210-211), changes into white clothing and thus has "become perfected through this encounter [with Helios] as a lord of godlike nature" (*isotheou physeôs kurieusas tês dia tautês tês systaseôs epiteloumenês*, lines 220-21). Then the practitioner passes on to the ritual that accomplishes "direct vision through lecanomancy" that is the real goal of the spell (lines 222-85).

action looks like traditional sacrifice: by burning the animal, particularly on an altar that has been as carefully constructed as this one has (lines 30-34), the practitioner delivers the animal to the god in whose honor the rite is being performed. But this is not really surprising for two reasons: first, one would need to get rid of the rest of that rooster in some way, after all, and burning it upon an altar is a means of disposal that has the advantage of pleasing the god. (Disposing of the rooster's head by tossing it into the Nile instead of burning it on the altar [line 40] follows what the Greeks thought was a standard Egyptian procedure.[33]) Second, we must remember what I emphasized in my earlier remarks. The rituals in the *PGM* are neither completely new nor gratuitously odd innovations; rather, they are *modifications* of *established* rituals, enacted with specific purposes in sight. If one wishes to kill an animal—either in order to perfect oneself or for some other reasons—centuries of ideology would demand that the killing be done sacrificially.

As I have portrayed him in this essay, the practitioner described in the spells of *PGM* IV neither ignored traditional rituals nor reversed or corrupted them; rather, he was a "creative conservator" of traditional rituals, using his expert knowledge of the sacred to extend them in ways that preserved their underlying ideologies. Notably, my portrait aligns very nicely with attempts by ancient authors to isolate a category of ritual specialist that approaches what we usually call a magician. Apuleius states it most directly in his *Apology*: the *magus* has an enhanced ability to communicate with the gods, is unusually interested in the workings of providence within the cosmos and worships the gods excessively.[34] But there are earlier instances of this idea as well: Hippocrates says that ritual healers who rely on purifications and incantations—what we might call "magical" healers—claim to have an enhanced knowledge of the divine.[35] The author of Derveni commentary derides professional initiators who claim to have made special knowledge of the sacred their craft; as I have argued in depth elsewhere, this sort of initiator and at least one type of Greek practitioner we might call a magician, the *goês*, were often the same person. Plato tells us that wandering practitioners who specialized in curse tablets claimed to have a finely honed ability to interpret the will of the gods.[36] Empedocles and Epimenides, too, combined reputations

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[33] Hdt. 2.39.1-2 and Plut. *de Is.* 31 (363b-c).
[34] Apul. *Apol.* 26.11-15 and 27.5-12.
[35] Hippocr. *de Morb.Sacr.* II-IV.
[36] *PDerv.* col. 20; Pl. *Rep.* 364b5-65a3. Discussion at Johnston, *Restless*, chpt. 3.

for heightened understanding of the sacred with what could be described as magical cures and purifications.[37] If Robert Ritner, John Baines and other Egyptologists are correct that it was the Egyptian lector-priests who copied out the *PGM* as we now have it, then this fits, too: an interest in "magic" was part of a larger professional interest in "religion."[38] Similar as well were the Jewish practitioners of later antiquity, whom Michael Swartz has characterized as experts in the mechanics of power.[39] The so-called "magician" of the *PGM*, then, is one link in a long line of other Greek "magicians"—and, so it seems, "magicians" from other ancient Mediterranean cultures as well.[40]

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[37] Epimenides and Empedocles: discussion and sources at Johnston, *Restless*, chpt. 3 and pp. 279-87.

[38] For this argument, see Frankfurter, "Expertise," and idem, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) 227-37; John Baines, "Society, Morality and Religious Practice," in B.E. Schafer, ed., *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths and Personal Practice* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991) 166-72; R.K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* SAOC 54 (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1993) 204-05 and 220-33; Geraldine Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1994) 47-60 and Yvan Koenig, *Magie et magiciens dans l'Égypt ancienne* (Paris: Pygmalion, 1994) 19-38.

[39] M. D. Swartz, "Magical Piety in Ancient and Medieval Judaism," in M. Meyer and P. Mirecki, above n. 1, 183.

[40] This essay has appeared in French in Alain Moreau and Jean-Claude Turpin, eds., *La Magie. Actes du colloque international de Montpellier 25-27 Mars 1999*. (Montpellier; Publications de la Recherche Université Paul-Valery, Montpellier III, 2000) vol. 2:19-36.

BEANS, FLEAWORT, AND THE BLOOD OF A HAMADRYAS BABOON: RECIPE INGREDIENTS IN GRECO-ROMAN MAGICAL MATERIALS

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> *"Nobody cares to search for herbs when confronted by hordes of doctors."*[1]
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> *"Where their health is concerned, people have less faith if they understand what is written."*[2]
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> *"On behalf of the Senate and the 600 years of the Roman Republic, I feel I must speak out like this against the profession of medicine. ... At the same time I must counter the misguided notions of those laymen who consider nothing beneficial unless it costs the earth!*[3]

The substances called for in the recipe sections of spells in the great handbooks of the Greek Magical Papyri are of four main types (among which there is a great deal of overlap).[4] First, there are well-known medicinal plants with real pharmacological effects recognized by both ancient and modern medicine, such as nightshade, etc., which are used in ways roughly harmonious with their functions in ancient medicine. These identifiable, pharmacologically active substances have frequently been discussed, in the service of comparing the techniques of the papyri with contemporary Greek or Egyptian medical practices, either negatively or favorably, depending on the perspective of the critic. Their appearance in the papyri, for spells regarding health and disease, and for erotic spells, has been shown to be well in line with the medical and botanical knowledge and ideol-

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[1] Pliny, NH XXV.16; trans. *Natural History, A Selection*, trans. John F. Healy (New York: Penguin Classics, 1991), 241.

[2] ibid., 265.

[3] ibid., 267.

[4] These types do not represent ancient categories. For the performance of PGM rituals, all of the substances of every type appear to have equal importance. The types are separated here because discussion of each of them raises different questions and methodological problems. This paper only addresses the fourth type.

ogy of antiquity,[5] and as such they constitute perfectly "rational" and pragmatic approaches to the achievement of these specific results, in the context of ancient thinking.

Both the papyri and a broad range of ancient literary sources preserve information about specific techniques for the procurement of these materials. Of these, some are also pragmatic. Theophrastus, in the *Enquiry into Plants*, says it is a sensible and rational precaution to cut certain roots, particularly θαψία, from downwind, and to first anoint the body with oil, blocking the root's caustic fumes and juices from contact with the skin and nasal passages.[6] But this advice is immediately followed in Theophrastus' text by his criticism of other, more colorful practices which he considers "irrelevant" (ἐπίθετα),[7] some of which reappear, much later, in PGM materials.[8] In these practices, which include the planting of 'replacement' seeds, burying of cakes, and invocation to the plant,[9] we see more than practicality and safety issues at work, but rather, a second category of ingredient employed by PGM rituals. This is the designated or consecrated plant, whose creation as an herb for a certain purpose is controlled by the rituals performed at its "birth," when it is picked and effectively transformed into something else. For example, in PGM IV 3172-3208, a spell for producing a dream oracle, the practitioner needs three reeds (καλάμοι) which have been carefully prepared by a series of elevations, spinnings, repetitions of "magical names" and vowels (with different sequences for each of the three reeds), and direct address to the reeds: αἴρω σε, ἵνα μοι ὀνειροθαυπτήσῃς—"I pick you to get a dream;" and αἴρω σε ἐπὶ ποιὰν πρᾶξιν—"I pick you for this

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[5] See especially John Scarborough, "The Pharmacology of Sacred Plants, Herbs and Roots," in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, ed. Christopher Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York: Oxford, 1991), 138-74; Jerry Stannard, "Medicinal Plants and Folk Remedies in Pliny, *Historia Naturalis*," *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 4 (1982), 3-23.

[6] *Enquiry*, 9.8.5-6. Similar precautions for handling thapsia are attested for this century, see Mrs. M. Grieve, *A Modern Herbal* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1996; orig. 1931), 794.

[7] *Enquiry*, 9.8.6-8.

[8] e.g., PGM IV 286-95; 2967-3006; 3172-3208, al. For full discussion of gathering, preparation and consecration of plants for healing and other rituals, see A. Delatte, *Herbarius: Recherches sur le cérémonial usité chez les anciens pour la cuilette des simples et de plantes magiques*, 3rd ed., Brussels, 1961.

[9] Possibly reflected in *Enquiry* 9.8.7, where Theophrastus says it is not unreasonable to "pray" while cutting certain plants.

specific purpose,"[10] the reeds' preparation is then completed by writing different magical names on each one. It is only after these preparations that the reeds are "ready," and the ritual can proceed. The reed is a very common plant and is clearly described by Theophrastus and other ancient herbalists, who ascribe to it no medicinal purpose. But in this ritual, the reed is not consumed,[11] and is therefore being used in a way that can have nothing to do with the plant's intrinsic qualities. Reeds are called for by several other PGM recipes, serving a variety of simple, ancillary functions: as a tool,[12] as a pen,[13] and as a bed.[14] Although the reed itself is not one of the elaborate, rare, and powerful substances that are associated with the stereotype "magic," its elaborate preparation in this spell makes it into something else, not just a reed, but a "power reed." As such, it becomes more special and therefore more rare than its fellow reeds that are unprepared; much as a simple cloth or vial of water can become much more religiously important to some believers through ritual consecration or contact with, e.g., a saint's tomb. Like such objects, the special reeds are indistinguishable from unprepared reeds, at least until the final stage of writing upon them.[15]

The third major category, which appears most often and most consistently, consists of substances that are almost always and everywhere part of the worship of the gods: aromatic gums and incenses, such as frankincense, myrrh, and storax, olive oil (for burning, steeping and anointing), wine, honey, etc. While the aromatic gums were

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[10] Although these texts use the language of "picking," the instructions call for the reeds to actually be picked before sunrise, with the invocations being recited "after sunset."

[11] In fact, even very pharmacologically active substances can fall into this category if they are not consumed, or are consumed in submicroscopic doses, as in the drinking of water into which words have been washed—the pharmacological power of the components of the ink in which the words were written is surely negligible.

[12] PGM IV 52-85, XXXVI 231-55, as a stick from which to suspend something; VII 186-90, for cutting off a gecko's foot.

[13] PGM V 304-69; XXXVI 264-74—metal pens are much more common.

[14] PDM xiv 117-49.

[15] Other examples: PDM xiv 554-626, a large block of medical spells that use lengthy invocations to the substances themselves, especially oil, which are then applied to the patient; PGM I 42-195, a spell to gain "an assistant," the end of the text says that the assistant will bring "wild herbs" (190). These may be supposed to suggest weird substances, but they may just be common substances that are special because they come from the assistant. Also: PGM LXI 1-38 (159-96), which addresses olive oil both as itself and as the sweat of the Good Daimon.

for the most part imported from Asia, Ethiopia, India, and Arabia,[16] and may therefore have been relatively more expensive than indigenous plants, their widespread use in both temple and domestic rituals throughout the entire Mediterranean world reflects well-traveled and long established trade routes supplying any number of local and urban incense or perfume sellers. Such items therefore, though "special," would be readily available throughout the Mediterranean, and could be purchased openly and without great problem, except for their expense. Though they sometimes appear in PGM used in strange and unique ways, in general they are part of creating a pure and "religious" atmosphere for the welcoming of whatever gods or spirits the practitioner hoped to meet.

The fourth major type of ingredient called for in spell recipes is the relatively exotic substance with no ordinary role in the lives of temples or domestic shrines, which may or may not have any pharmacological effect in itself or in the way it is used. This is an extremely varied category, including everything from mule hairs, lizards, dung, etc., to magical material and the burial sites of murdered gladiators, etc. Because each substance appears infrequently in the corpus overall, most of them only once, it is very hard to get a sense of its use from repeated examples, as one can with, e.g., frankincense or myrrh. While some of them seem bizarre, many others are herbs, plants, animals and stones which are simply uncommon or are used in unusual ways. These problematic substances form the category of ingredients that, in both ancient literature and in modern popular imagining, is most closely associated with the stereotype of "magic."

Discussion and analysis of these substances is complicated by several factors, including regional variation in names used for plants, animals and stones, and uncertainty about a shared vocabulary be-

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[16] Even though Ethiopia is technically close to Egypt, trade between the two countries was hampered by the Nile cataracts. Goods from Ethiopia therefore reached Egypt and the rest of the Mediterranean via the same ports and way-stations used for trade with Arabia Felix, India and the Far East. This contributes to confusion in ancient sources about the ultimate origin of many imported substances, which appear to come from, e.g., Arabia or Alexandria, because those places were important transfer or processing points. For discussion of this problem, see Steven E. Sidebotham, *Roman Economic Policy in the Erythra Thalassa, 30 BC-AD 217*. *Mnemosyne* Suppl. 91 (Leiden: Brill, 1986); Lionel Casson, *The Periplus Maris Erythraei* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), esp. 11-44; J. Innes Miller, *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire 29 BC to AD 641* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969).

tween botanical and medical writers and the language of everyday life.[17]

The spells themselves sometimes seem to be aware of the problem of uncertainty about the names of certain substances, and take steps to ensure that the proper substance is used. For example, PGM IV 475-829 requires an herb "called *kentritis*."[18] The text carefully describes this plant, [19] and provides a test for its authenticity.[20] Other times, the anticipated problem seems to be linguistic. In the Demotic visionary spell PDM xiv 117-49, a recipe for an eye ointment calls for a certain plant whose name is written in Coptic, the only phrase in the spell to appear in Coptic other than magical names; the plant is then described and the reader is told which merchant in the marketplace would be likely to have it—the lupin or wreath seller.[21] Elsewhere in PDM xiv a number of plants are listed with their names written both in Demotic and Greek[22]—more on those later. Another motivation for this is the author or scribe's awareness of one or more alternative manuscripts that give different names for particular substances.[23]

Recipes also sometimes specify geographical sources for the required substances. For some purposes, it seems, it was important to have not only, e.g., figs, which grow in several places around the Mediterranean, but Karian figs.[24] These requirements may sometimes actually refer to the way a thing is made, and not necessarily its point of origin. For example, "Egyptian wine"[25] and "Mendesian wine"[26] are specified several times. This may connect to the require-

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[17] A further level of complication for the modern interpreter is introduced by criticisms of plant identifications in our primary resource, the *Greek Lexicon* of Liddel, Scott, and James: Scarborough, "Pharmacology," n. 2 on p. 163; Richard J. Durling, *A Dictionary of Medical Terms in Galen* (Studies in Ancient Medicine 5; Leiden: Brill 1993), vii.

[18] PGM IV 774.

[19] PGM IV 800-811.

[20] Other examples: PDM xiv 395-427, describing the Anubis plant; PDM xiv 727-36, which goes into a long description of ivy.

[21] The phrase appears in H.D. Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells* (Vol. 1, Texts; 2nd ed., Chicago, 1986; later *GMP*), 203, as the "Greek Bean Plant," though J. Johnson, the translator, notes that the words literally mean "eye of raven plant," otherwise unknown (n. 95).

[22] PDM xiv 886-96; 897-910; 920-29; 933-34; 940-52; 966-69.

[23] PGM I 247-62.

[24] PGM I 232-47; IV 3172-3208.

[25] PGM IV 2359-72; XIII 734-1077.

[26] PGM I 42-195; IV 475-829; IV 1275-1322; IV 2622-2707.

ment in PGM XIII[27] for wine "not mixed with seawater." According to Pliny, the most popular wine of his day was in fact, flavored with seawater.[28] So, the requirement of Egyptian or Mendesian wine might be there to make a connection with the land of Egypt, but it also might simply reflect types of wines people know not to be salted. Other specifically Egyptian substances called for include onion,[29] Nile rush seeds,[30] and Egyptian acacia or acanthus seeds.[31] But at least as many other recipes call for specifically named non-Egyptian ingredients, such as Italian κύπερος (galingale)—a kind of rush or reed,[32] three mentions of Attic honey,[33] in contrast to probably dozens of occurrences of honey of unspecified type;[34] Cretan storax,[35]and even "Greek natron."[36]

The level of detail in the description of ingredients for recipes in PGM formularies is not consistent. While some spells may call vaguely for "seasonal flowers,"[37] or "every kind of perfume except frankincense,"[38] some are amazingly specific. PGM II 1-64 calls for, among many other things, the little nail of the right front foot of a black ram;[39] PGM IV 3086-3124 includes a phylactery to be written on the rib of either a young pig or of a black, scaly, castrated boar; PGM VII 462-66 is an erotic lamella which specifies that it should be inscribed with a copper nail from a shipwrecked vessel.[40] That these recipes are serious about emphasizing the importance of having ex-

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[27] PGM XIII 1-343; 343-646; 646-734 (in which it is "Egyptian wine not mixed with seawater").

[28] From Clazomenae; Lesbian wine is also salted; *Natural History* XIV 73.

[29] PGM IV 1331-89.

[30] PGM VII 490-504.

[31] PGM XII 96-106: σπέρματος ἀκάνθης Αἰγυπτίας.

[32] PGM IV 2441-2621.

[33] PGM I 1-42; III 424-66; VII 191-92.

[34] There is also a mention of Syrian honey in PDM xiv 701-5.

[35] PGM IV 2622-2707. Storax comes from a tree which Thph. associates with Syria, Media or India. There are several occurrences of storax with no geographical qualification.

[36] PGM XIII 343-646.

[37] PGM III 282-409; IV 296-466; 1716-1870; 2145-2240; XIII 734-1077, et al.

[38] PGM XII 270-350.

[39] ὄνυχα may also be a name for a kind of incense or a component of incense for the Jerusalem temple, ultimately of marine origin; Exod. 30:34. The level of detail in PGM II 1-64 may be there to avert any confusion with this substance—or it may reveal a compositional "layer" and a literal-minded scribe.

[40] There are many other such examples, but I have chosen these because they are relatively unambiguous—they do not appear in contexts that suggest "coded" or colloquial plant names.

actly these specific substances is, I think, indicated by the fact that the same spells are capable of being vague or "loose" about other substances. For example, PGM VII 186-190 calls for the severed right front foot of a tomb-inhabiting, blood eating gecko; a very specific description; but the practitioner is required to cut off the foot simply with a reed, a moderately to vaguely specific instruction (reed, but not type of reed). The same spell that calls for a copper nail from a shipwrecked vessel refers to magical material so vaguely that we cannot tell whether it comes from the victim or the practitioner; etc., etc.

In all of these instances where the texts provide descriptive information or a variety of names for a substance, the effect is to clarify and further specify what it is, not to code or obscure it. When a single spell expresses itself generally about some substances, and very specifically about others, the choice of one over the other is an important indication that the author of the text (or the seller of the spell or the spell book) seriously intends the use of that particular substance, and intends to create the impression—whether he himself believes it or not—that *only* that substance will bring the desired effect.

Authors of these texts may have felt it important that only particular substances be used, but it is not always easy for the modern reader to know whether a variety of names refer to a single item, or whether several items are being denoted by the same name. The preserved magical handbooks do not use a consistent vocabulary for the description of ingredients, and this can lead to frustration and to real problems in the interpretation of a given spell text. For example, only two texts, PGM XIII 1-334 (22 and 228) and XXXVI 320-32 use a substance called ὄροβος, vetch or bean. In the first instance, the *Eighth Book of Moses*,[41] the ὄροβος is clearly not an actual bean, but a bean-sized lump or ball the practitioner is supposed to make out of the seven incenses just named. This particular text does know a variety of manuscripts, and here cites one of them, which apparently calls these lumps of incense a "solar bean," (ὄροβος ἡλιακὸς) and says it is good for every purpose. The main author (apparently) now returns and says that this ὄροβος refers to "The Egyptian Bean," κύαμος

[41] This particular text presents many problems of this kind. For example PGM XIII 734-1077, the "third version of the book," calls for "navel of crocodile". But the text immediately says "he means pondweed," (ποταμογείτωνας); how then to interpret the requirement of κορκοδείλου ἀφοδεύματι in XIII 245-46, the "applications" section of the "first version" of the same book? And how then do we interpret the other appearance of ποταμογείτωνας (PGM IV 1275-1322)?

Αἰγύπτιος, a term he apparently expects to be more familiar—as incense—than ὄροβος ἡλιακὸς. Since both times the word ὄροβος appears in PGM XIII it is specifically connected with these incenses, its meaning is relatively unambiguous in that text. In the second instance, from PGM XXXVI 320-32 (a contraceptive recipe), ὀρόβοι are "taken" (not made), steeped inside the genitals of a menstruating woman, then extracted and fed to a frog which is released alive; the rest of the spell lists many other animal and botanical ingredients that are gathered and worn in a fawnskin amulet. Are the ορόβοι here to be literally understood as "vetch seeds," or are they the same lumps of blended incense, appearing here with no key, possibly because the author or scribe felt this to be obvious? In his discussion of this recipe in *Magika Hiera*, John Scarborough takes them as literal vetch seeds, since they, along with henbane, are the only pharmaceutically active substances in the recipe.[42] It is important to note, however, that the henbane is only in the amulet bag, and that the ορόβοι, though coming into contact with a woman's body through "steeping," are not consumed by her; moreover, since the language of the spell may suggest a male contraceptive ("the only one in the world") rather than a female one,[43] the ορόβοι are removed even further from physical—or pharmaceutical—contact with the beneficiary of the spell. The other directions in the recipe are not determinative, as these uncomfortable procedures could be carried out with either real vetch seeds or incense balls.[44] The question is one of context: whether the term should be interpreted in terms of another PGM recipe, or simply in terms of ancient botany and modern pharmacology. With these infrequently-occurring ingredients, there is usually little to guide this decision, but it has an enormous effect on the evaluation of the nature of a text, the social world it presumes, and the kind of activity it describes.

Identification and interpretation of PGM substances is hindered even further by the small section of so-called Priestly Interpretations

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[42] Scarborough, "Pharmacology," 158.

[43] Seeds are required in the number of years "you" wish to remain sterile, subject modified by ἀσύνλημπτος; but you then let "her" steep them. Whether it is a male or female contraceptive depends on how one takes the ambiguous phrase βρεξάτω αὐτὰ εἰς τῆν φύσιν ἑαυτῆς.

[44] Although both vetch and incenses would probably ultimately be toxic for the frog, it is not clear how much more irritating incenses would be to the woman. It should be noted that this spell is preceded and followed by spells clearly involving myrrh, one of the incenses. For spells to appear in handbooks in small groups sharing substances is not uncommon.

of Substances, that appears at the end of the Greek section of PGM XII,[45] and by two lines of PGM XIII,[46] that appear to reveal a whole "underworld" of equivalent ingredients for items called for in PGM recipes. PGM XII 401-44 presents itself as ἑρμηνεύματα ... μεθηρμηνευμένα, "translated interpretations," a key to false and misleading names used by holy scribes in temples to hide the real substances they used in their rituals. This introduction, correctly recognizing that many ancient Egyptian monuments are covered in holy texts, claims that those who inscribed them have used this code technique "because of the curiosity of the masses" (διὰ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν περιεργίαν), who presumably might try to go home and perform the rituals independently. Note that this method will not prevent anyone from actually "performing magic,"[47] but only from getting any result, due to use of improper and ineffective ingredients.[48]

This particular text "de-codes" only one and possibly two substances that are actually called for in PGM recipes, so in itself it confuses the issue in relatively few cases. The troubling possibility that it introduces, however, is that there were several or many such lists or correspondences, and that those who collected these texts or performed these rituals deliberately coded the substances they used, either to protect the world in the event of the book falling into the wrong hands, or to impress and demand higher prices from anyone who might be purchasing a spell and its required ingredients (or both).[49] People would probably be willing to pay more for a bottle

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[45] PGM XII 401-44.

[46] PGM XIII 166-7.

[47] *GMP* 167; trans. H.D. Betz (the list portion is trans. by John Scarborough).

[48] This introduction appears to assume that the texts inscribed on Egyptian statues of the gods include recipes in addition to hymns or prayers to those deities, or chronicles of the leaders who set them up. It also seems to assume that hieroglyphic script was legible to "the masses" at some point in history, which is not likely. The issue of literacy in Egypt, in all of its languages and scripts, is an enormous one; see Roger S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 230-60; J.D. Ray, "Literacy and Language in Egypt in the Late and Persian Periods," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, ed. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 51-66.

[49] Scarborough's assumption, that these were simply "divine names given to ordinary herbs ... names taken for granted by priests, scribes, and probably the common people ..." ("Pharmacology," 159-60) is contradicted by the absence of any of these names from PGM materials, with the four exceptions discussed below. His analogy is to the complicated incense κῦφι, but in the case of the Priestly Interpretations, the definitions/recipes are clearly not to complex preparations, but to single items. Scarborough here is apparently trying to make the text work two opposite ways—as both deliberate hiding, and as regional dialect variation.

labeled "navel of male crocodile" than one labeled plain old "riverside weeds;"[50] but PGM XIII 1065 says that these are the same thing. If any substance called for beyond the most common ingredients must be suspected of hiding the name of a simple plant or herb, then the possibility of gleaning certain kinds of information about social and geographical location, cultural context, expense, and the commercial and religious transactions represented by these texts is seriously undermined. It may ultimately prove impossible to derive information of this kind from PGM materials, but before the attempt is abandoned, a reconsideration and methodological analysis of this problematic text is in order.

These Priestly Interpretations have formed part of the recent effort in scholarship to understand PGM materials in the context of the rich variety of religious attitudes and practices of Greco-Roman antiquity, rather than as freakish or "degenerated" examples of either bad science or of exploitative charlatans on the fringes of a religiously empty world. Many excellent studies have appeared showing the strong connections between elements of PGM materials and other texts and traditions traditionally considered more "normative:" Greco-Roman mystery religions, ancient Near Eastern practices, early Jewish visionary literature, Christian Gnosticism, and especially, ancient Egyptian and Greco-Egyptian temple practices. These studies have surveyed deities, ideas, and linguistic features, as well as the substances, animals and objects in these texts that reflect one or another of these other traditions. Wax,[51] lamps that have not been painted red,[52] mice,[53] lizards,[54] the techniques of herb gathering, etc., have all been related to the functioning and symbolism of Egyptian temple life. Through this work our understanding of these materials has so far passed the prejudices and stereotypes of earlier scholarship that even the use of the term "magic" to describe them has become problem-

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[50] see above, n. 41.

[51] Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, SAOC 54 (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1993), *passim*; Maarten J. Raven, "Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism," *OMRO* LXIV (1983), 7-47.

[52] Ritner, *Mechanics*, 144-50.

[53] W.R. Dawson, "The Mouse in Egyptian and Later Medicine," *JEA* 10 (1924), 83-86.

[54] Arthur Darby Nock, "The Lizard in Magic and Religion," in *Essays on Religion in the Ancient World*, vol. 1, ed. Zeph Stewart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 271-6.

atic.[55] The Priestly Interpretations allow PGM materials to seem even more "normal," in the sense that fewer recipe ingredients, once "interpreted," resemble the caricature of magic or witchcraft represented in ancient literary sources, where nefarious old women haunt graveyards and slaughterhouses; and more of them resemble ingredients used in so-called rational medicine and in temple observances. This, however, diminishes the fact that items which appear elsewhere can sometimes be used in PGM in ways very different from temple life or rational medicine! It may be possible that in the effort to exorcise this unhelpful caricature from modern scholarship, an "overcorrection" has occurred which may obscure something particular about PGM materials, especially recipes, and may interpret it away through use of a text that, on close scrutiny, itself presents huge problems in interpretation.

The text in question begins in column 12 of the papyrus. Both the list and the introduction are indented with relation to the previous spell, but in line with the magic names that are part of the erotic insomnia spell 376-96, indented to accommodate a figure. The list itself continues into column 13, which it fills completely, bringing the scribe to his next exemplar, the Demotic text that begins in column 14. This may indicate that the list, its introduction, or both, were loose at the time of copying and that the scribe of PGM XII has combined them.[56] The change to a new language (Demotic) and to a new text at the top of col. 14 is an even stronger indication that at some point in transmission, the Priestly Interpretations were either loose or appeared at the end of the Greek formulary that is contained in the first 13 columns of PGM XII. The ends of manuscripts are of course notorious "grandmother's attics" where all sorts of things are likely to turn up. This text may not really pertain the to the formulary that precedes it; in fact, the introduction may not even pertain to the list.

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[55] These studies have contributed greatly to the contextual understanding of the papyri themselves, as well as to the scholarly repertoire of ways of thinking about religion. However, methodologically we are once again skating pretty close to the boards of the "clear light that shone o'er Greece/Rome"—because Greek and Roman cultures are only "borrowers" of strange religious elements, which actually derive from, i.e., standard Egyptian temple practice or from immigrants living in their lands.

[56] Or, the combination of loose leaves may have occurred earlier, and the scribe of PGM XII simply re-produces the line lengths and breaks form his exemplar exactly.

The introduction's claim that the interpretations have been compiled from "many copies" may be borne out by the chaos we find in the list that follows, which at some level of transmission prior to its reproduction in PGM XII may have been put together from loose leaves or fragments of varying sizes assembled in random order. The list itself is in two parallel columns, the left hand column for the most part giving bizarre and impossible-seeming substances, all body parts, fluids, or other products from humans, animals, insects and deities; and the right hand column, the supposed interpretations, listing for the most part simple plants and herbs. There is no discernible pattern to the organization of the pairs, though chunks of column B seem to preserve a very rough sort of Greek alphabetical order: 414-423 or possibly 424; 433-440, taking καν θάρου and κάρδια as the lemmata for lines 437 and 438; and 441-444 are the most noticeable examples. The preservation of this order at some level of copying may account for the complete lack of order in column A.[57]

Column A, the "substances requiring explanation," consists of physical material from both mortal and immortal beings. The mortal beings, snake, ibis, χοιρογρύλλος, baboon, crocodile, lion, human being, pig, physician, eagle, an Egyptian type of goose,[58] bull, and falcon, are, with the exception of χοιρογρύλλος,[59] clearly identifiable creatures, many of which (crocodiles, bulls, baboons, falcons, ibis) had religious importance for Egyptian temples, and were embalmed and entombed in or around them.[60] The divine beings, Hephaistos, Hermes, Ares, Hestia, Kronos, Helios, Herakles, an unspecified Titan in the singular, and Ammon, are, with the exception of the last, named by Greek names, but several of them are well-known equiva-

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[57] I have spent a fair amount of time trying to discern either linguistic or thematic patterns that would explain the order in which the pairs appear, or would suggest an alternative order in which they may originally have appeared. Other than the vaguely alphabetic chunks in col. B, the list appears to be in random order.

[58] The χηναλωπηξ, which is, according to LSJ, a specifically Egyptian variety of goose.

[59] χοιρογρύλλος is an extremely rare word, appearing, apparently, only here and in Biblical and related texts, where it translates (in LXX Lev 11:4-6) the Hebrew "shafan," which is itself a rare word of uncertain meaning, which became the famous "rock badger," because the shafan is among rocks in Ps. 104:18. Both components of χοιρογρύλλος are words for pig or piglet. In the Priestly Interpretations, PGM XII 412, it is the only example of a term that is a translation of itself (αἷμα χοιρογρύλλου ... ἀληθῶς χοιρογρύλλου), a strong indication that the compiler of the equivalencies himself did not know what it was.

[60] Alan K. Bowman, *Egypt After the Pharaohs: 332BC-AD642* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 172-4.

lent names for important Egyptian gods frequently addressed in the papyri, especially Hermes (Thoth), and Helios (Ra). Some of the animals mentioned are particularly associated with some of these deities, for example, the baboon with Hermes-Thoth, etc. The Egyptian flavor of this list is very evident. But it is important to remember that these are the substances being *explained away*—their presence in this part of the list marks them specifically as false names and un-necessary items.

Only one of these items, αἷμα κυνοκεφάλου, is clearly called for elsewhere in PGM materials. The κυνοκέφαλος appears in various invocations and descriptions of gods and apparitions,[61] is used several times as a shape for a figure in wax,[62] and provides a model language for the pronunciation of certain vowels and words.[63] There are, however, only four direct requests for it as an ingredient in recipes, and of these, only one is unambiguous. The dung and magical material of the κυνοκέφαλος are required by the two related erotic slander spells involving Selene, PGM IV 2441-2621 and 2622-2707; and its blood and heart are required by PGM XIII 316 and 1067 (these two are also related since they are variants of the same text, the *Eighth Book of Moses*). The slander spells call for the dung and magical material specifically, but in each case, the poetic invocation selections of the spell claim that not the practitioner, but the blasphemous victim, is using these substances in improper and evil rites. They therefore function as examples of something that the goddess would feel that it is horrible to use, and this is supposed to make her like the victim less and the practitioner more. These two examples are rare in that simpler variations of the blasphemous, god-angering substances in the slander poems are in fact actually called for in the recipe sections that come later in the texts; but except for that they fall into a subcategory of truly bizarre and actually fictional substances, such as the pierced vagina of a black sphinx,[64] which appear only in incantations and not in actual recipes.[65]

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[61] PGM IV 1003, 1687; VII 782; VIII 10, 29; its birth as a result of sacrilege, in Selene slander spells: IV 2600; 2663; part of a vision: XIII 154f, 464f.

[62] PGM IV 3139; VIII 53.

[63] PGM IV 1006f; V 27; XIII 84, 596.

[64] PGM IV 2310.

[65] Some examples: PGM III 494-611; IV 94-153, IV 2241-2358, IV 2622-2707; V 213-303; VII 222-49, 643-51; VIII 1-63, VIII 64-110; PDM xiv 554-62 (mentions blood of black dog in prayer, but doesn't call for it), PDM xiv 636-60 (sun is called scarab of lapis lazuli, but actually scarab of Mars -a real bug—is used; plain wine is used, but addressed as blood of a wild boar from Syria).

PGM XIII 316 clearly and specifically calls for αἷμα κυνοκεφάλου as a recipe ingredient for one of the long series of "applications" that follow the first version of the *Eighth Book of Moses*, this one for sending dreams. The practitioner must write the dream he wants to send on hieratic papyrus with myrrh ink and baboon's blood, then roll up the papyrus and use it as a wick. Myrrh and the blood are both required, but specified separately. At the end of the third version of the *Eighth Book of Moses*, a shorter series of applications includes one for opening doors that calls for a baboon's heart, but here, in the same passage that "interprets" crocodile navel as riverweeds, the heart is immediately interpreted by a parenthetical phrase which makes it equivalent to myrrh or perfume of lilies, or both.[66] This last reference then does not parallel 316, since there myrrh and baboon material are called for separately, and therefore are probably not the same thing.

Other references in PGM materials make clear that related words, κυνοκεφαλίδιον and κυνοκεφάλιον[67] are in fact words for plants. Four spells call for these plants,[68] a fairly high number in this particular category. The words are attested as plant names in other ancient literature, though mostly through scholia that say it is equivalent to some other plant; the LSJ entries actually describe these other plants. The lexicographical situation for these words is incredibly complicated, but the main point is that there is no apparent mysterious secret about κυνοκεφάλιον and related words representing plants. No authority lists ἄννηθος, dill, as one of the correspondences as the Priestly Interpretations do. Of these testimonies, only Pliny discusses a religious role (he calls it a magical role) for the plant.[69] He claims to have heard from Apion the Grammarian, notorious resident of Egypt, that the herb *cynocephalia* is known in Egypt as *osiritis*, and is believed to be a source of divination and a protection against black magic.[70] There are no calls for any plant *osiritis* in PGM, and the word is not attested in other ancient literature, although the lexicographical situation there is also tortuous. The main point is that Pliny

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[66] PGM XIII 1066: λαβὼν ... ὠὸν κανθάρου καὶ κυνοκεφάλου καρδίαν (ζμύρναν λέγει, κρίνινον μύρον) ... It is unclear whether the parenthesis refers to both items, or provides two possible "translations" for the one item that immediately precedes it.

[67] This form is also used for the shape of the wax figure in PGM VIII 53.

[68] κυνοκεφάλιον (GMP trans. "calf-snout plant"): PGM III 479 (visionary); V 198 (thief catching), 372 (visionary); κυνοκεφαλίδιον (GMP trans. "snapdragon"): VII 620 (invisibility and erotic).

[69] *Natural History* xxx.18.

[70] But if you pull it up with bare hands, you will die.

knows the name *cynocephalia* as a fairly common plant name, with a variant in Egypt; again, it is not dill or like dill.

There is one other substance in the "to-be-explained" category that may be called for in PGM materials. This is γόνος Ἡλίου in line 433. Although the form is different, the word ηλιογονον, written in Greek, appears in the Demotic handbook PDM xiv, the London-Leiden papyrus,[71] written along with some other notes in column 1 of the verso.[72] This section of PDM xiv contains several "clumps" of definitions of stones and plants,[73] separated by other notes and short prescriptions. ηλιογονον and σεληνογονον are followed by the pretty unambiguous statement, "these are herbs." This list is not presented as secret, but rather simply appears to provide the Greek names of herbs, possibly so that the practitioner can shop for them. ηλιογονον and σεληνογονον appear also in PGM III 332, where an unfortunate text break makes it unclear whether the two terms are independent herbs, or descriptive terms modifying single-stemmed wormwood.[74]

The introduction to the Priestly Correspondences certainly creates the impression that the substances needing interpretation are frequently mentioned in holy texts that are prominently displayed, the conditions that necessitate "coding" in the first place. The point of all this detail above is to demonstrate that the substances in column A are not in fact called for, except for the one and possibly two exception/s, which are terms already openly known to be plants. This again highlights the mis-match between what the introduction claims it will do and the list that follows it.

The "de-coded" column B includes, out of a list of 37, several substances that are clearly called for elsewhere in PGM as actual recipe ingredients. Five ingredients are unambiguous: βδέλλα is mentioned several times,[75] and ἀρτεμισία is very common.[76] γάλα

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[71] Edition, transliteration, and translation: F. Ll. Griffith and Herbert Thompson, *The Leyden Papyrus: An Egyptian Magical Book* (New York: Dover Publications, 1974 [orig. 1904]).

[72] This section of PDM xiv is not included in Preisendanz, who only includes the three Greek invocations from the ms. They were translated (by J. Johnson) and included in GMP xiv, lines 886 -1227.

[73] PDM xiv 886-96, 897-910, 920-29, 933-34, 940-52, 966-69.

[74] The terms are not elsewhere used to describe wormwood.

[75] Though not as "a leech," as Scarborough translates in *GMP*, 167, but as a form of incense or aromatic gum; PGM I 262-347; IV 1275-1322; 1716-1870; VII 429-58; al.

[76] Though it is usually modified by some kind of adjective. ἀρτεμισία alone is requested in PGM I 232-47; II 1-64; IV 1275-1322; VII 993-1009, al.

συκαμίνης,[77] ἀρτεμισίας κάρδια,[78] κεδρίας,[79] and ὠὸν κανθάρου[80] each appear only once. Four further terms may appear, in rather different forms. σελεγβει possibly represents the Demotic "chelkbei," which also appears at PGM V 70-95.[81] ἀκανθίνας Αἰγύπτιας appears as a component of Typhonian ink.[82] The καλαβώτος also appears elsewhere in PGM,[83] though in those three places it is not specifically the blood that is used. PDM xiv requires the practitioner to use his own semen in an erotic concoction; this may be an example of ἀνθρώπου γόνος, but this is a specific call for the practitioner's magical material, not a general recipe ingredient as in the Priestly interpretations.

As I mentioned, there is another sequence of identifications on the verso of PDM xiv. After the ηλιογονον and σεληνογονον discussed earlier, this text discusses five plants,[84] three of which, in different order and with different spellings, appear at the end of the list of interpretations. This may reflect a common source for these two tiny portions of text; if so, once again, the "version" in PDM xiv is not decoding secrets, but is simply giving the Greek names of the plants and some brief descriptions of them.

As with the left-hand column, therefore, we see that the purpose of the introduction is not carried forward by the items in the right-hand list. The introduction claims to reveal de-coded names of substances whose use is meant to be secret, but what it does reveal is a list of things that are clearly called for any number of times quite openly, under these supposedly de-coded names. The list provides explanation where explanation is not needed, and provides mystification

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[77] also in PGM VII 222-49; a variation in PGM VIII 64-110.

[78] also in PGM II 232-47.

[79] a variation in PGM XII121-43.

[80] also in PGM XIII 734-1077. ὠὸν κανθάρου appears in the same section of PGM XIII (1066) in which navel of crocodile and heart of baboon are also interpreted. Depending on how the parenthetical phrase is taken, ὠὸν κανθάρου may itself be translated by "myrrh."

[81] Griffith and Thompson identified the chelkbei as trigonella foenumgraecum, which they then translated as "wild garlic." This botanical name, though, actually represents fenugreek, which was still used for medicinal purposes in Cairo, under the name "helba," in this century.

[82] PGM XII 98.

[83] PGM VII 186 (foot); 628 (whole—drowned in lily oil); LXI 40-50 (whole). There's a strange series of connections here—baboon blood = gecko blood; gecko appears in VII 628 drowned in lily oil; lily oil may "translate" baboon heart in XIII 1066.

[84] Four, if we identify χρυσόσπερμον with κρινανθεμον, as John Scarborough appears to do by translating both terms as "houseleek" in GMP—though he does not discuss the issue.

rather than clarity. These points may collectively suggest that the introduction and the list do not belong together, that the list "interprets" substances from a formulary that is lost, or that it does not interpret PGM-style materials at all, but belongs in a quite different context, one that remains unknown.

So, what is this text, who created it, what is it doing in PGM XII, and how literally should we take it in the interpretation of PGM recipes? One approach is to focus upon what the text actually accomplishes. If the pairs are read from left to right, in the order that its interpreters have usually followed, it has the effect of "de-Egyptianizing" the materials required for the performance of these rituals. While the majority of items in the left-hand column appear to reflect or require an Egyptian setting, almost none of those in the right-hand column do. Although most of the items there would probably be available in Egypt, they would be equally available almost anywhere around the Mediterranean, especially as Roman rule progressed. In fact, in at least one case, the "buckthorn" or ῥάμνος in line 411, the substance suggests Greece, specifically Attica, much more than Egypt.[85] From this perspective, the correspondences, if taken seriously, actually would tend to dis-empower Egyptian priests, rather than to assert their importance. This of course is an exactly opposite effect than the introduction to the list intends, which is to locate the origin of recipes and practices in Egyptian temples, and the keys to ritual power in the hands of the temple priests and scribes. It is not impossible that the list's original context is not to be found in Egypt, and that it ended up there—and in PGM XII—through some fluke of travel or trade. It may reflect Greco-Roman appropriation of Egyptian texts and rituals taking place outside of Egypt, with the substitutions of plants for the other items taking place as a way to perform rituals independent of the tradition in which they originated.[86] If this could be demonstrated, it would provide an interesting—and unusual—opportunity to study *Greco-Roman* input into the tradition that came to be known as "magic." Unfortunately, because the list as we see it today is in a very garbled state, with both the pairs

[85] ῥάμνος does appear also in PGM III 512, not as a recipe ingredient, but as part of a lengthy descriptive invocation to Helios, which goes through several different hours, each one of which associates the god with a particular tree, animal and stone.

[86] Another possibility is that the list presents compromises used by Egyptian priests operating in locations outside of Egypt—in this case, it would indeed be a secret, private document!! But the fact that our copy of this list does come from Egypt tends to undercut this idea.

and the actual correspondences open to question, analysis of the conceptual relationships between the two columns cannot really progress very far. Additionally, this view fails to explain the fact that column A materials are not in fact usually called for in such rituals—the substitutions are not needed.

There is another, opposite situation in which the list would in fact do what the introduction says it will do. If the columns as we see them are actually intended to be read from right to left, or even if by some scribal mischance they have been accidentally reversed, then the effect of the text as a whole would indeed be to reveal a mystery: that the apparent plants and other simple ingredients of PGM materials are in fact incredibly rare and powerful substances that the average person would not be able to obtain, but that he or she might assume to be available to Egyptian priests through their work in temples and at the necropoleis of so many of the animals named in column A. Such a set of correspondences would have the effect of making it impossible for the un-careful masses denigrated by the text's introduction to achieve any result in their ritual performances, unless they were carried out through the "power-brokerage" of Egyptian priests, who would stand to benefit considerably, certainly in prestige and possibly financially as well, if they were involved in distributing little packages that, despite their innocuous labels, were believed by their purchasers to contain, e.g., Hestia's blood. By this I do not mean to suggest that Egyptian priests actually believed that they were using the bodily fluids of deities and sacred animals. Rather, this could be seen as an example of the kind of deliberate "bizarre-ification" recently discussed by David Frankfurter[87] as "stereotype appropriation:" the alteration of Egyptian temple practices to meet the expectation of a Greco-Roman "marketplace" which wanted its Egyptians using weird animal parts and deities' bodily fluids, not homely items such as dill, chamomile, and turnips.[88] This possibility is interesting, and requires further research and thought.

Whichever of these directions further interpretation takes, this text does not provide a reliable guide to the understanding of PGM substances, and should not be used as a paradigm for hypothesizing a wide variety of interpretative substitutions. Although I do not doubt

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[87] David Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); 224-37.

[88] This kind of exoticism is also the explanation used by Brashear for the increasing use of *voces magicae* etc. in the papyri from the 1st through the 3rd centuries; William Brashear, "The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928-1994), *ANRW* II.18.5, esp. 3429-3438.

that ritual practitioners occasionally faced emergency situations that led to substitutions on an ad-hoc basis, in cases where such exigencies are foreseen, the suggested substitutions are as close as possible to the original ingredient,[89] not a radical change from a body part to a simple plant—or the reverse. The best guides to interpretation of PGM recipe ingredients are the numerous other instances of texts specifying their substances carefully, by color, season, merchant; and by dialect, language or synonym. In the majority of these cases, except for the Priestly Interpretations and the two lines of PGM XIII discussed above, it is clear that these synonyms and descriptions are not a license for substitution, and that common plants cannot be assumed to lie behind the requirements for rare and unusual substances in the PGM handbooks. This being the case, it should be possible through further study to more firmly identify some of these substances, and, through the evaluation of their rarity and expense, begin to locate recipes and spells more clearly in specific social and geographical contexts.

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[89] For example, PGM V 54-69 requires water from a shipwreck, but allows the substitution of water from a sunken rowboat if no shipwrecks are available. It does not suggest the substitution of, e.g., parsley, etc.

THE WITCHES' THESSALY

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My title, "The Witches' Thessaly," should be taken in the sense of "the Thessaly of Witches," not "the Witches of Thessaly." The focus rests on the reputation for sorcery of the geographical region of Thessaly in ancient Greece rather than on the ritual of "drawing down the moon" with which I shall initially associate Thessaly. I propose to investigate why Thessaly acquired a reputation for sorcery and at the conclusion will offer a suggestion. As for specific detail about drawing down the moon, D. E. Hill, Anne-Marie Tupet, and P. J. Bicknell covered this subject thoroughly, so that I shall repeat their findings as little as possible.[1]

Thessaly was, and is, a largely level area of northeastern Greece bounded on north, west, and south by mountains but with access to the sea on the east. Its significance in ancient Greek history began and petered out early. Ancient Greeks, however, remembered Thessaly for its legends and legendary characters: the Centaurs, particularly Chiron, part of the career of Heracles, Jason with his Argo, and Achilles.

Among the ancient Greeks and Romans from the late Classical age on Thessalian women had the reputation of being able to draw down the moon from the sky. The first surviving mention among the Greeks of the feat we can establish firmly–occurs in a joke in the comedy *The Clouds* by the late fifth-century BCE writer Aristophanes.[2] In the play the central character Strepsiades, "the twister," tries various "twists" to avoid paying the debts, or even the interest on the

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[1] *La magie dans la poésie Latine: I, Des origines à la fin du règne d'Auguste*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1976, and "Rites magiques dans l'Antiquité romaine," *ANRW* II.16.3, pp. 2591-2675, especially 2616, 2622,2631-33, 2665-67. D. E. Hill, "The Thessalian Trick," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, 116 (1973), pp. 221-238; P. J. Bicknell, "The Dark Side of the Moon," *MAISTOR: Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*. Canberra: The Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1984, pp. 67-75.

[2] JoAnn Scurlock of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago calls my attention to one Akkadian reference: Erica Reiner, *Astral Magic in Babylonia*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society 85,4. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1995, pp. 97-101. She cites much of the classical material paralleled in this paper.

debts, that his wastrel son has accrued.[3] In desperation he goes to the "Phrontisterion," the "think shop" run by the Socrates, whom Aristophanes presents as a sophist who teaches devious behavior. Socrates orders him to engage in what we would call "brain storming," only poor Strepsiades is better at "storm" than at "brain." He tosses off a suggestion thus:[4]

> I would buy a witch woman ("medicine woman," φαρμακίδ⟨α⟩), a Thessalian, and take down the moon at night. Then I'd shut it up in to a round box like a face mirror, and then I'd keep it there.

Socrates, puzzled, asks his pupil what good that will do him. Strepsiades responds:

> If the moon doesn't rise at all, then I wouldn't pay the interest.
>
> When Socrates asks how that is, Strepsiades cites Athenian commercial code:
>
> Because debts are paid by the month ("by the moon," literally).

Both Strepsiades and Socrates would have been aware that the first of the month was marked by the new moon, and on that day a debt or interest on it was due. Here an ancient scholiast comes to our aid, not with more about interest payment dates but about Thessalians. The text of the note reads:[5]

> The Thessalians (masculine plural, in Greek) are slandered as being wizards (γόητες), and even yet among us, Thessalians (feminine plural now!) are called φαρμακίδες ("medicine women").

A curious variant in one of the manuscripts has instead of "Thessalians are called φαρμακίδες" rather "they call φαραμακίδες 'Thessalians.'"[6] This inversion shows the first instance of something we shall note increasingly, that "Thessalian" acquires the more general sense of "magical" and loses any geographical determination.

The scholiast goes on to explain the origin of the *materia medica* of Thessalian sorcery:

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[3] Hill, p. 238, finds significance in Strepsiades' suggesting the disappearance of the moon as a way to evade debt: "Verrier Elwin (*Myths of Middle India*, Madras, 1949, p. 69) reports a number of Indian myths in which the sun or moon are said to be held as sureties for a debt, so that it may not be coincidental that our earliest classical reference to the Thessalian trick (Aristophanes *Clouds* 749-52) is also associated with debt while our last classical reference (Nonnus *Dionysiaca* 36. 344-49) attributes the trick to brahmins." I find this unlikely.

[4] *Clouds* 749-56. The translation is mine.

[5] *Scholia vetera in Nubes*, to 749.

[6] Version E.

> They say that when Medea was fleeing <in her air-borne dragon chariot> she threw out a chest of herbs there which took root and grew.

Again we have an allusion to a reputation that Thessaly will not shake in antiquity, a close connection with Medea, even though legend makes her a foreigner and her stay in Thessaly was brief.

Not long after the production of the *Clouds*, Plato has his Socrates touch lightly on the lunar rite in advising Callicles to act cautiously in the polis:[7]

> Consider this, if it is advantageous to you and me, my good fellow, so that we don't suffer what the women who draw down the moon, the Thessalian women, do.

We know something about drawing down the moon, but what is it that the women who do so "suffer"? One scholiast asserts that they would lose a family member. That Medieval Byzantine lexicon, *The Suda*, gives us a different consequence in explaining a saying, "You're drawing down the moon on yourself." Says the lexicographer:[8]

> The Thessalian women who draw down the moon are said to lose their eyes and feet.

A generation after Plato came the Syracusan tragedian Sosiphanes, from whom comes one substantial fragment relevant to our topic. His tragedy *Meleager* contained these two lines:[9]

> With magical incantations every Thessalian maiden is a
> fraudulent bringer down of the moon from the aether.

Thus Sosiphanes seems to suggest that the women do not really bring down the moon, but only appear to. Incidentally, this use of "magical," μάγοις, in a Greek context of this period is pejorative, evoking a note of the foreign and hostile Persians, the very people with whom the Thessalians were accused of collaborating.[10]

In and of itself the citation from Sosiphanes adds nothing to what we have already learned; it only reinforces the commonness of the reputation of the Thessalian women. The source of the citation, however, is more instructive. It derives from an ancient scholiast who was

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[7] *Gorgias* 513a

[8] (anon.), *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. Ada Adler. Lexicographi Graeci 1. Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, reprint Stuttgart 1971. part 2, p. 377, #2559, ll. 11-14

[9] Fr. 6 N2.

[10] Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 29.

elucidating a passage of Apollonius, where a half-brother of Medea tells that "she bound the stars and the paths of the holy moon."[11]

In the next book of the *Argonautica* the moon goddess recalls that Medea had hidden her, the moon, away with the result that she could not look on her sleeping lover Endymion (4.57-65). Version α of the scholia explains:

> The myth is told that the witches draw down the moon by incantations. The Thessalian women intend to do this, but err about the eclipse. Accordingly Aglaonike, since she was experienced in astronomy and knowing the eclipse of the moon, <that is,> the time that it would occur for them, claimed that she was drawing down the moon, and immediately she fell into misfortunes, losing one of her family members.

Plutarch tells much the same story, three times, in fact, though he says nothing about the practitioner losing a family member.[12]

While still in the Greek cultural orbit, classical and sub-classical, another problematic appearance of Thessalian sorcery deserves mention. The Elder Pliny, fretting about the subject of drawing down the moon, said that Menander had a comedy "The Thessalian Woman."[13] Whether the comedy was about a courtesan of that name or about a sorceress who drew down the moon, or possibly about both, remains unclear in the absence of any fragments of the work and in light of Pliny's uncertainty

It is in Roman literature that we find by far the most frequent mention of Thessalian sorcery. G. W. Bowersock, in writing of Roman Thessaly, comments:

> Most Romans under the principate knew Thessaly chiefly through Literature, in particular as a place of magic and of demonic women. They had little apprehension of the real Thessaly.[14]

Thessalian sorcery enters extant Roman literature well before the principate, associated with a putative male, however, not a woman, and freed from drawing down the moon. Plautus in his comedy *Amphitryon,* produced probably about 201 BCE, has the hero Amphitryon, befuddled by meeting two copies of his personal slave Sosia, one of them being the god Mercury, as well as by his own doppelgänger, the god Jupiter, exclaims, "By Pollux I'll get even to-

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[11] *Argonautica* 3.533.

[12] *De defect. orac.* 417a, *De coniug. praecept.* <48?> See also *De Pyth. orac.* 400b.

[13] *Nat. Hist.* 30.6. Discussed by S. Eitrem, "La magie comme motif littéraire," *Symbolae osloenses 21(1941), P.50.*

[14] G. W. Bowersock, "Zur Geschichte des römischen Thessaliens," *Rheinsches Museum für Philologie* 108(1965)3, p. 277.

day with that Thessalian witch-doctor (*veneficum*) who upset my whole household."[15] We cannot determine whether this phrase occurred in any of the earlier dramatic versions of the Amphitryon legend. As far as we know, Plautus has given us our first Thessalian sorcerer who is male and the first who does not conjure the moon down.

Most, not all, Roman literary dealings with Thessalians and their ritual talents classify as reductionist. The practitioners are women, they draw down the moon, though they have other skills in their repertoire, and the end of their practices is erotic. Early in this century Eugene Tavenner undertook to catalogue the Roman authors who addressed or alluded to Thessalian lunar ritual.[16] Besides Plautus he names the poets Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Seneca, Lucan, Valerius Flaccus, Statius, Martial, Juvenal, and the prose writers Pliny the Elder and Apuleius. We may add Claudian and the Christian poet Prudentius, who several times and rather insistently rejects the power of the Thessalians.

On occasion the Roman poets simply use "Thessalian" as a synonym for what they might otherwise call "magical." This is clearly the case in the first surviving Roman reference to drawing down the moon, in Horace's Fifth Epode. Folia, with an Italian name and explicitly from Rimini, "<she> who brings down the enchanted stars and the moon from the sky with Thessalian voice" (45-46) is simply using a "magic" voice. She is, moreover, aiding her friend Canidia in a child sacrifice to compel a lover to come to her. The moon is merely an allusive ornament. Horace, who can use commonplaces without slipping into clichés, works several variants of the Thessalian motif. One who lives a moral life "laughs at dreams, magic terrors (*terrores magicos*), marvels, wise women(= "witches"), nocturnal ghosts, and Thessalian portents (*Ep.*2.2.208-09).

Finally Horace inverts the cliché that presents magic as an amatory technique. On the contrary, love is more powerful, as he tells us in an ode:

> What witch, what *magus* with Thessalian potions, what god can set you free? (*Carm.* 1.27.21-22)

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[15] ego pol illum ulciscar hodie Thessalum veneficum,
qui pervorse perturbavit familiae mentem meae.
Plautus, *Amphitruon* 1043-44.

[16] *Studies in Magic from Latin Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916, p. 20, n. 96, and in more detail, "Roman Moon Lore," *Washington University Humanistic Series,* Publications of Washington University, Series IV, no. 1, 1920, p. 54, and nn. 75-82. I have omitted Virgil and others whom he includes, for they do not mention Thessaly.

We would find it otiose to pursue magical Thessaly (or its synonyms Haemonia, Emathia, Edonia, and Atracia) through its occurrences in the majority of the Roman poets. The remainder of this study will concern the two substantial roles of Thessaly in Latin writers, where the reputation of Thessaly becomes the driving force of the narrative. The first we find in the sixth book of the *Pharsalia* or the *Civil War* by the Neronian epic poet Lucan and the other in the *Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* by the second-century C.E. novelist Apuleius.

Lucan clearly has an agenda in his epic, to condemn the Roman civil wars that led to the ascendancy of the Julio-Claudian line, even though he has dedicated his epic to the last survivor of that line, Nero. That Julius Caesar's great victory over the senatorial party led by Pompey took place in witch-haunted Thessaly suited Lucan's program perfectly. His run-up to the central battle of his epic is a grand-guignol scene of necromancy conducted by the most flamboyant witch of Roman literature, Erictho (*B.C.* 6.507-830), whom he introduces with a digression on Thessaly and particularly on its reputation for acts of sorcery, which he calls "scelerum ritus," "rituals of crimes" (507). He begins his account with an accusative announcing his theme, "Thessaliam" (333), a dramatic emphasis facilitated by the flexible word order of Latin. First he tells us of Pompey's decadent son Sextus, who rejects traditional, sanctioned oracles and turns to the "Haemonides," Haemonian, that is, Thessalian women (435). His recital of their repertory ends with our familiar ritual:

> … bright Phoebe grew pale, beset by the dire venom of their words, and she glowed with dark and earthly fires, no different than if the earth with its fraternal image were in the way and were inserting its shadow onto the celestial flames; and <the moon> endures such labors until it draws near and foams down onto the earth underneath (500-06).

This "foam" may be the "virus lunare," "moon poison," that Erictho later uses to revive the corpse of the slain soldier on whom she performs her necromantic ritual. Erictho herself does not enchant the moon, however, or perform any of the other rituals employed by the "Haemonian" women. These she scorns as "crimes of excessive piety," in Lucan's oxymoron (507-08).

Ninety years after Lucan another energetic writer and stylistic innovator took the theme of Thessaly and made it the dramatic setting of his narrative. This was Apuleius of Madaura, one of the two surviving Roman novelists, author of *The Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass.* Apuleius did not pick up the notion of a supernatural Thessaly primarily from Lucan, for his novel clearly was modeled after a lost Greek original, represented for us by a derivative work entitled *Lucius, or the*

Ass, attributed incorrectly to the satirist Lucian, a contemporary of Apuleius. Commentators for generations have busied themselves so exclusively with the relation of *The Metamorphoses* to *Lucius, or the Ass* and its predecessor, also called *The Metamorphoses*, that a concern for the novel's relation to Lucan's epic has fallen by the wayside.[17] A suggestion of a relationship appears in some of the wording of the two Latin works. Apuleius begins his account of his journey with the accusative "Thessaliam" (1.2.5), and, after a parenthetic interruption, says, "eam Thessaliam . . . " This recalls Lucan's introductory accusative "Thessaliam" (6.333) that I have mentioned earlier. In a listing of the reputed effects of sorcery he lists "lunam despumari," "the moon to be made to drop foam" (1.3.17), using the same verb as Lucan. We may concede to the lost Greek work behind *Lucius, or the Ass*, the plot, down to details. Certainly the selection of Thessaly as the scene of the action derived there. In Lucan, however, Apuleius had an available model for vocabulary and style, as the two verbal similarities would suggest.

By the middle of the second century of our era this *topos* may have reached its high tide, but it has not exhausted itself. At the very end of Classical Roman literature the poet Claudian, telling of the Gothic invasion of Italy, reports that persistent eclipses of the moon frighten the Romans, who will not believe in the astronomical explanation. Instead, they attribute them to "Thessalian camp followers (feminine gender) <who> pollute the moon's gleam with their hereditary potions" (XXVI, *De bello Pollentino* sive *Gothico* 236-238).

Let us cautiously assemble what we know of the reputation of ancient Thessaly for witchcraft, sorting it out chronologically and differentiating Greek and Roman viewpoints.

First, from our investigation we primarily know something about the Athenians rather than the Thessalians. Indisputably some Athenians and Syracusans of the late fifth and fourth centuries BCE entertained or were entertained by a belief that there were women in Thessaly who could draw down the moon. Aristophanes, Plato, Sosiphanes, and allegedly Menander assure us of that.

Next, we know that the Romans took the Athenian statements and ran with them, no longer limiting Thessalian talents to lunar manipu-

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[17] Lucan escapes mention in Helmut van Thiel's *Der Eselroman: I, Untersuchungen.* Zetemata: Monographien zur klassischen Altertumswissenschaft 54/I (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1971) and in the various essays of *Aspects of Apuleius' Golden Ass,* ed. B. L. Hijmans, Jr. and R. Th. van der Paardt (Groningen: Bouma's Bockhuis, 1978), except for A. G. Westerbrink's "Some Parodies in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*," p. 63, but there the reference is to a parody of Lucan by Petronius.

lation but exending to a wide range of ritual actions that lay outside the parameters of approved public cult.

Is there, then, any indication that there actually was any Thessalian ritual of attempting to draw down the moon actually practiced? One specific one, I believe. Recall the story of Aglaonike, told both by a scholiast and by Plutarch, by the latter three times.[18] Here we have a personal name of a Thessalian, not of one who practiced witchcraft but of one who exploited the ignorance of others to claim credit for what Sophie Lunais called "the most characteristic act of the women magicians" and D. E. Lee, "the Thessalian Trick."[19] But Aglaonike pulled off her hoax because there were already other women attempting to draw down the moon and failing. This constitutes our only contact with any specific Thessalian person or reality in our entire survey.

I should conclude this hurried overview of ancient references to the reputation of Thessaly by offering a suggestion as to its origin, namely, the legend of Medea, a figure we have met several times in our survey.[20] And the question to ask is not, "What land does legend say Medea came from?" but rather, "What land did the legend of Medea come from?" The legend cannot come from the land ascribed to her as her homeland. Medea is in the earliest tellings from the Land of Oz, that is to say, "Aea," "the Land," pure and simple.[21] The seventh century poet Mimnermus located this never-never land at the edge of the Ocean, to an early Greek, a never-never river encircling the earth (fr. 11). Homer (*Od.* 12.3 similarly locates "Aeaea," the home of Circe, as the *Theogony* (956-62) does the home of Medea. Later tellings of the legend, first by Herodotus (1.2), then by Pindar (*Pyth.* 4.11), but most notably by Apollonius, responding to Greek exploration of the Black Sea, made Aea into the historic Colchis on the easternmost shore of the Pontus. This is a recognizable process in the development and retelling of a legend. In post-Homeric legend Odysseus meets the Cyclops in Sicily and even Frank

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[18] Above, p. 4.

[19] *Recherches sur la lune, I. Les auteurs latins de la fin des Guerres Puniques à la fin du règne des Antonins*. Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire Romain (Leiden: Brill, 1979), p. 226. The title of Hill's *RhM* article, note 1 above.

[20] A participant in the 1998 Magic in the Ancient World Conference whose identity has slipped my memory calls attention to Meno's remarks to Socrates in *Meno* 80b and c, where the Thessalian trots out several of the Greek words for wizardry and enchantation, even suggesting that in another city Socrates would have been jailed for it. Does he mean in his own Thessaly, no focal point of enlightenment at the time?

[21] Albin Lesky, "Aia," *Wiener Studien* 63(1948), 24-25, 68.

Baum at one point suggested that Oz was close by California.[22] Medea, the stories went, traveling with Jason from Aea, later Colchis, to Greece first set foot in Thessalian Iolcos, an indisputably historical place, where she used her herbal skill to restore first an aged ram and then Jason's father Aeson to youth before murdering Pelias, the king. This occupied a place in a lost tragedy written by Sophocles, the *Rizotomai*, the "Root Cutters," and probably deals with Medea foraging for supplies. A fragment (491 N) preserves seven lines of a chorus describing someone ritually harvesting sap and roots. Prof. Graf maintains that "<t>he story of Medea belongs not to Colchis, in other words, but to Iolcus, the city from which Jason sets out and to which he returns with Medea."[23] Medea became so much the archwitch of antiquity that a scholiast I cited earlier attributes the proliferation of potent herbs in Thessaly to her brief visit.[24] I believe initially Thessaly became "the witches' Thessaly" because of Medea. The port city of Iolcus, just before it and Thessaly sank into relative insignificance in the course of Greek affairs, left behind the core of a legend that would enrich and be enriched by lyric poetry, tragedy, and graphic art.

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[22] Riley, Michael O'Neal, *Oz and Beyond : The Fantasy World of L. Frank Baum* (Lawrence : University Press of Kansas, 1997), p. 95, 112-13.

[23] Fritz Graf, "Medea the Enchantress from Afar," James J. Clauss and Sarah Iles Johnston, edd., *Medea: Essays on Medea in Myth, Literature, Philosophy and Art.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) p. 33.

[24] P. 3 above.

SPEECH ACTS AND THE STAKES OF HELLENISM IN LATE ANTIQUITY *

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A previous generation of scholars, notably E. R. Dodds, viewed the *de Mysteriis* of the late antique Neoplatonist Iamblichus (ca. 250–ca. 325) as the finger removed from the dike of ancient Greek rationalism.[1] This work, which appeared to be something of a summa of high-brow ancient magic, allowed the waters of superstition and irrationalism to wash over the late antique world and drown the strategies of pure contemplation that had been carefully nurtured by philosophers from Plato to Plotinus. In short, magic overwhelmed philosophy. Not coincidentally, Iamblichus' Syrian origin fit into older evaluations of the Neoplatonists as "Oriental" corrupters of the classical mind.[2] The two notions, magic and oriental, fit together all too well. In this paper, I will argue that in order to understand Iamblichus' work, which advocates the practice of mysterious sacred rites to achieve spiritual ascent, we need to be attentive to these entangled visions: magic and Eastern foreigners.

One obvious strategy in the face of the Doddsian legacy is to pull up such cultural stereotypes by the roots. With our attention heightened by critiques from contemporaries like Bowersock, Said, and others, we might undertake a thorough-going disentangling of the

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* A version of this paper was delivered as part of the panel "Social History of Formative Christianity and Judaism," organized by Dale B. Martin, at the conference for the American Academy of Religions and Society of Biblical Literature, San Francisco, November 23, 1997. I would like to thank Fritz Graf, Sarah Iles Johnston, and David Frankfurter for their kind criticism.

[1] E. R. Dodds, "Introduction," *Proclus' Elements of Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), xxiv.

[2] More recent scholars, including John. M. Dillon, Dominic O'Meara, John Finamore, and Gregory Shaw, have taken a more nuanced view of Iamblichus' work, and accorded this pivotal figure in the Neoplatonic tradition the careful attention he deserves. See John Dillon, "Iamblichus of Chalcis," *ANRW* 2.36.2 (1987) 862–909; Dominic J. O'Meara, *Pythagoras Revived: Mathematics and Philosophy in Late Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); John F. Finamore, *Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul* (Chico, Calif. : Scholars Press, 1985); Gregory Shaw, *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995).

East and magic.[3] However, as I will try to demonstrate, we will lose something if this is our only approach to the curious work of Iamblichus. Iamblichus, the Syrian, inserted himself into the turbulent spiritual debates of late antiquity by thinking within (as well as partially manipulating) a remarkably similar set of stereotypes that were current in his own day. I suggest that we need to keep these stereotypes in mind, precisely insofar as they made their presence felt in the minds of the ancients themselves. Such a strategy yields only a little, alas, in our understanding of the manifold cultures that count as Eastern in such equations (including Egypt, Syria, Babylonia, and India). It is, however, crucial in our understanding of the visions and verities, hopes and fears, that inhabit the thinking of the heirs to Plato and Aristotle.

Contemplative and Active Ways

The Neoplatonists took a distinctively spiritual, for lack of a better word, approach to the practice of philosophy. All of Plotinus' (205–270) followers were deeply moved by his vision of philosophy as a soteriological pursuit. At stake was not simply a dry intellectual appreciation of the world, but the salvation of individual souls through a program of rigorous contemplation that could lead the devotee to nothing less than union with the utterly transcendent principle of the cosmos. Porphyry, who edited Plotinus' work, wholeheartedly agreed with his master's emphasis on contemplation and not ritual. The way to the One is by thoughts, not acts. Porphyry's junior colleague, Iamblichus, thought just the opposite. In the *de Mysteriis*, Iamblichus began from the premise that ritual action has a useful role to play in the individual's discipline of enlightenment. He gave a clue as to his reasoning in his *Timaeus* commentary:

> But if, when the best part of us [the intellect] is perfect, then the whole of us is happy, what would prevent us all, the whole human race, from being happy at this moment, if the highest part of us is always enjoying intellection, and always turned towards the gods? If the Intellect is the

[3] Glen Bowersock's whole corpus has thoroughly troubled any easy cultural clichés around the period. See especially Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, Jerome Lectures, 18 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990). Any current accounting of the categories "East" and "West" in the Mediterranean owes some debt to Edward Said, whose work has granted such questions an entirely new prominence and relevance in the larger scholarly conversation. E. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

> highest part, that has nothing to do with the soul: if it is a part of the soul, then the rest of the soul also must be happy.[4]

In other words, Iamblichus argued that if one could think one's way to the divine, what would prevent a person from doing it all the time and enjoying continual union? The bitter experience of distance from the One convinced Iamblichus that more than thinking is required, one must actually DO something to find the divine. What one does turns out for Iamblichus to be a program of rites, which he called theurgy [θεουργία] and which Porphyry called magic [γοητεία].[5] Iamblichus, more than any single figure, thrust the theurgic rites to the center of late classical philosophy. Most of his successors were convinced by his arguments. Iamblichus produced the most significant development in Neoplatonism (after Plotinus' founding of the school) for the next thousand years—at least down to the time of Marsilio Ficino (1433–99). The theurgic program prominently included the animation of statues as well as the practice which will detain me at greater length, the use of the *onomata barbara*, or invocation of the gods by means of specially potent divine names.

The Culture of Contemplation

Porphyry was unconvinced by Iamblichus' innovations. At some point in his career, he wrote a polemical letter to a fictitious Egyptian priest whom he called "Anebo," in which he made a detailed and sweeping refutation of the legitimacy of ritual practice in the pursuit of spiritual ascent. The breadth of the attack is often overlooked. Porphyry's detailed refutations questioned whether nearly any devotional act in the mundane world could have a role to play in spiritual ascent. He stakes out what we might call a pure contemplationist position. From within such a position the terms "ritual" (of any kind) and "magic" will flow somewhat seamlessly together. Therefore, to understand Porphyry's attack as a defense of reason against magic, already tilts the argument to Porphyry before it begins.[6] It makes a

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[4] Iamblichus, *Timaeus Commentary*, frag. 87 (in Iamblichus, *In Platonis dialogos commentariorum fragmenta*, John M. Dillon, ed. [Leiden: Brill, 1973].)

[5] Dodds and Anne D. R. Sheppard follow Porphyry's characterization. See Dodds, "Theurgy," appendix in *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Sheppard, "Theurgy," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[6] For further discussion along these lines, see A. C. Lloyd, "Porphyry and Iamblichus," in *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 296.

final judgement on what Iamblichus wanted to argue is an open question—whether his program counts as "magic" or "ritual." If we allow Iamblichus to have his say, we could find other contexts to understand their debate. Greek thinkers, after all, had traditionally argued over the relevance and efficacy of human devotions toward the divine. Cicero gives us a glimpse of this old debate in the *de Natura Deorum* where he stages a debate between Epicurean detractors of traditional religious worship and equally strong Stoic supporters (e.g., *de Nat.* I.56, II.71–72).[7]

If Porphyry's main concern is the cultic practice of his fellow Neoplatonists, it may seem odd that he chose to attack them indirectly, through a fictitious Egyptian surrogate. Pseudonymity made a certain amount of sense, however, when we consider that the Neoplatonic supporters of theurgy went to some lengths to establish an Egyptian pedigree for their practices. Porphyry engaged in a rhetorical flourish, then, challenging his peers who were inventing a new brand of rites by attacking the history they were constructing for themselves—more remains to be said on this point. By looking closely at one of the theurgic practices in dispute, I hope to show that such Eastern "straw men" as Porphyry's fictitious correspondent, Anebo, played a very real and important role in the contested formation of Neoplatonic theurgy, in and through the categories of ritual and magic.

In his letter, Porphyry refuted the practice of invocation of a god by means of traditional names drawn from various Mediterranean languages. Similar beliefs in the potency of special words are old and diffuse in Mediterranean cultures, from the so-called Ephesian letters, whose reputation was widespread in Greece,[8] to the divine names in the *Greek Magical Papyri*,[9] to various prohibitions on uttering or writing the names of a god. In refuting the practice of invocation by means of divine names, Porphyry wondered why "we" Greeks did not just use our own names for the gods instead of importing foreign ones:

> Also, what do the meaningless names [τὰ ἄσημα ὀνόματα] mean? And why are the foreign names for each god preferred to our own [τὰ

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[7] Epicureans raised objections to human worship of the divine as a form of superstition. The Stoics here supported traditional worship of the gods as a means of upholding custom and leading the individual to right living.

[8] See Chester C. McCown, "The Ephesia Grammata in Popular Belief," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 54 (1923), 129–140.

[9] K. Preisendanz, et al., eds. *Papyri Graecae Magicae. Die Griechischen Zauberpapyri*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973–74). English translation, H. Dieter Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 2nd edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

> βάρβαρα πρὸ τῶν ἑκάστῳ οἰκείων]? For if one refers the utterance to the thing it signifies, the conception itself [ἡ αὐτὴ ἔννοια] clearly remains independent [αὐτάρκης], whatever word one may assign to it. For the god invoked, I suppose you would agree, would not be of the Egyptian race. Even if he is Egyptian, at any rate he does not use Egyptian, nor in short, any human speech. For either all these are the artificial contrivances [τεχνάσματα] of enchanters [γοήτων], and veils [προκαλύμματα] originating from our affections [τῶν περὶ ἡμᾶς γινομένων παθῶν], which we attribute to a god; or without realizing it, we hold conceptions [ἐννοίας] concerning god that are the opposite of what is really the case. (10a-10b)[10]

Porphyry's main line of argument here was that the divine could not have a preference regarding the names used for it, since it is surely above ethnic distinctions and so could have no meaningful connection with one particular culture's name or another. Greek speakers should use Greek names for the gods, the others are pretentious affectations, when used by Greeks. Speakers of other languages will have their own words which operate like the Greek ones. All these names are conventional markers for the same underlying divine referents.

The theoretical heft behind Porphyry's position is provided by a theory of language, specifically Aristotelian, that words are conventionally accepted labels for a set of mental notions (Porphyry's ἔννοιαι) which presumably map onto a set of entities (in this case a divine being) out in the world.[11] Whether one language group uses a particular set of sounds for one thing and another uses another is trivial and purely arbitrated by conventional agreement among a group of speakers. The matter that is indicated, and its mental correlate, remain constant. Such a theory was never fully embraced by Plato. In the *Cratylus*, Socrates remains in tension between two positions: 1) if language is to be an adequate tool for understanding the forms, it must be stable and not subject to the whims of the many, the final arbiters of "convention," and 2) the sounds of words really do not match up with the ideas they indicate. The former concern is precisely where Aristotle differed from his predecessor. He embraced

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[10] References to Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem*, ed. A. R. Sodano (Naples: L'Arte Tipografica, 1958).

[11] In the *de Interpretatione*, Aristotle tells us that the word is a sign of a πάθημα [affection] of the soul, which results from the world pressing itself on us:

> As writing, so also is speech not the same for all races. But the mental affections themselves, of which these words are primarily signs, are the same for the whole of mankind, as are also the objects [πράγματα] of which those affections are representations, or likenesses.(16a6-8).

the common conceptions expressed in the collective experience and understanding of a group of speakers. Plato did not trust "the many" to fabricate a language that is reliable. Porphyry here sided with Aristotle and treated words as conventional labels that could just as well be one thing or another. The word, on this reading, is a disposable piece of cultural baggage. True reality will not care what it is named.

If we take a closer look at Porphyry's seemingly straightforward position, two poles are evident. On the one side is a universalizing spirit, which assumes and values a ground that transcends culture, nation, and language. This is also, need we say it, the side where the divine rests. In standard post-Plotinian Neoplatonism, divine beings dwell near the top of a hierarchy of being, well above the profusion of differences (including linguistic ones) that reigns in the material world. The very notion of the divine, in Porphyry's mind, might even be defined as that which rises above, or brings to naught, the variations and differences that exist on the material plane. In Porphyry's argument against the divine names, we find a cultural analogue to this metaphysical principle. The divine overwhelms cultural variations and renders them trivial. Exchange "Greek culture" for the "divine" and one could also label this, interestingly enough, the very spirit of Hellenism, as it is customarily envisioned in a post-Alexandrian Greek world. Forming Porphyry's other pole, we find senseless language, artificiality, an intrusion of the parochial concern of ethnicity into the divine realms, and the misattribution of lowly sense-data to the immaterial divine. All these components of the second pole are clustered around a single transgression: a confusion of the hierarchy that separates what is material and mundane from what is immaterial and divine. It is significant that Porphyry invoked the category of magic [γοητεία] as part of his summation of this second group of concerns. In fact, such a confusion is the very heart and soul of the notion of magic, in its customary classical use as a polemical category. We need to add a final term to this second pole: the non-Greek. In this part of their extended debate, Porphyry and Iamblichus argued *specifically* over a group of names derived from non-Greek languages. Such names were collectively known as the ὀνόματα βάρβαρα.[12] While Porphyry's argument, then, dwells on the

[12] See, e.g., Galen, *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis ac facultatibus libri*, in C.G. Kühn, ed. *Claudii Galeni opera omnia*, vols. 11-12 (Leipzig: Knobloch, 1826 [repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1965]), vol. 12, 297.6; *Chaldean Oracles*, ed. É. des Places (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1971), frag. 150.

plane of high abstraction and immateriality, it is also, I suggest inevitably, deeply implicated in the mundane issues of culture and nation. It is part and parcel of a centuries-old Greek consensus on the value of the universal, over and above the local. Such a rhetoric, invented well before Greek imperial aspirations, fits all too well the needs and imagination of an imperial culture, where the local is always the parochial, and the universal is simply the common good.

The Culture of Action

Iamblichus, writing some years later, answered Porphyry's charges, point-by-point, in the long tract handed down to us as the *de Mysteriis.* In keeping with the charade of Egyptianism under which Porphyry began the debate, he adopted the persona of Anebo's supposed master, Abammon. With regard to the divine names, Iamblichus answered in book VII that the gods have certain favorite names, notably Egyptian and Assyrian ones, and that these have mysterious, ineffable connections to the gods they signify. Iamblichus claimed that the names used for the gods by the different nations are not perfectly interchangeable from language to language, but that some nations, due to their wisdom and antiquity, have preserved more appropriate names for the divine. Iamblichus continued that though the meanings of some of these names may be unknown, they are all significant [σημαντικά] to the gods, though not in an articulable mode [οὐ κατὰ ῥητὸν τρόπον] (*de Myst.* VII.4.8-9). These divine names indicate their referents in a different way. We must, Iamblichus counsels, put away our pedestrian notions of the ways language works. The divine names are beyond reason. We must remove every thought [ἐπίνοια] and rational account [λογικὴ διέξοδος] from our consideration of them. Furthermore, their link to their referents is not a simple "naturalism," such as the one Plato explored in the *Cratylus.* Iamblichus cautioned against any notion of likeness between the sound of words and the nature of the things to which they refer (*de Myst.* VII.4.13-16). "What is present" in the divine names, he says emphatically, "is an intellectual and divine symbolic mark of the divine likeness—this must dwell within the names" [ὅσπερ δέ ἐστιν ὁ νοερὸς καὶ θεῖος τῆς θείας ὁμοιότητος συμβολικὸς χαρακτήρ, τοῦτον ὑποθετέον ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασι (*de Myst.* VII.4.16-18)]. The wording συμβολικὸς χαρακτήρ is significant. Iamblichus used it elsewhere of an amulet or talisman upon which one stands to invoke the god—a ritual Iamblichus did not endorse (III.13). Next, Iamblichus granted that if names were set down according to convention [κατὰ συνθήκην], then it would not matter

whether a person used one or another, "but if they are suspended [συνήρτηται] from the nature of things, those names which are more adapted to it will also be more dear to the gods." [εἰ δὲ τῇ φύσει συνήρτηται τῶν ὄντων, τὰ μᾶλλον αὐτῇ προσεοικότα καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς ἔσται δήπου προσφιλέστερα (*de Myst.* VII.5.8-10)]. Iamblichus states that the divine symbols are the things "most united" [τὰ μάλιστα συνηνωμένα] to the gods themselves, and that they "attach" [συνάπτοντα] us to them (*de Myst.* VII.5).

In constructing his defense of such efficacious language, which is antiquity's most ambitious theory of a connection between word and thing, Iamblichus also created one of the ancient world's most fully articulated theories of ritual language.[13] With terms that suggest not representation through intermediate layers of intellectual reality but actual direct linkage—συναρτάω, συνάπτω, and συνενόω—Iamblichus meant something precise and relatively straightforward (if such a word is ever appropriate within the context of Neoplatonic ontology).

Iamblichus claimed that some names are final links in great and mysterious chains of being that proceed out from the very god to which they refer. The key here is the foundational Plotinian concept of emanation: the idea that all reality flows from a single utterly transcendent source, called the One, and keeps a part of its higher cause in itself. With the theory of emanation behind him, which passed for something like common sense in late antiquity, Iamblichus could make the claim that certain names not only call to mind the gods to which they refer, but actually provide a chain of emanation to the transcendent. They are a divine trace nestled into our daily world, or what Eliade might have called a "hierophany." That in a nutshell is Iamblichus' position—an interesting one in itself, to be sure, especially for those interested in the history of language theory, in which this vision (mediated through Proclus and the Christian adapter of Neoplatonic thinking, Pseudo-Dionysius) played a somewhat more prominent role than is currently appreciated. But when we bring Iamblichus' theory into conversation with Porphyry's, we note something rather conspicuous. Both Porphyry and Iamblichus held an emanationist view of the cosmos. For manifold reasons, Porphyry did not wish to emphasize this line of thinking, nor to extend into the realm of language the immanence corollary that follows from

[13] By "natural connection" as opposed to "convention" I mean the proposition, tested by Plato in the *Cratylus*, that a word is connected with its referent κατὰ φύσιν as opposed to κατὰ συνθήκην.

it. Similarly, Iamblichus was just as devoted as his rival to the notion that the One is utterly transcendent. But, for manifold reasons, Iamblichus chose not to emphasize the transcendence position in his rhetoric regarding the divine names, opting instead to extend the Neoplatonic views of divine emanation and immanence. Both their views grew out of strongly held Plotinian positions. We will not find satisfactory or exhaustive reasons for this difference in emphasis, but whatever the reasons behind them, their choices put cultural issues stake, just as much as they did philosophical ones.

Just as we found within Porphyry's language a cultural rhetoric concurrent with the ontological and theological ones, we find the same in Iamblichus' answer. Iamblichus, under the guise of Abammon, couched his argument for the efficacy of divine names in an argument against the shallowness of a race of people he labeled as the "Greeks," "Ἕλληνες." The Greeks, he argued, have lost touch with the ancient and efficacious divine names because of a certain impatience in their national character. Drawing on a line of thinking opened by Herodotus and Plato in the *Timaeus*, Iamblichus claimed that, in comparison with the Egyptians, the Greeks are by nature overly fond of innovation, they flit about everywhere, they neither preserve their own cultural foundation nor that of others, they abandon it quickly and remake everything by their unstable and sophistical ingenuity (VII.5). As opposed to the Greeks and their destructive love of innovation, Iamblichus extolled the wisdom and spiritual depth of that great and hoary set of people known to the Greeks as the Barbarians, or "βάρβαροι." These other, older and more patient nations—including the Egyptians, and interestingly enough the Assyrians—are in spiritual matters everything that the Greeks are not. They are stable in their manners, "μόνιμοι τοῖς ἤθεσιν," and have respect for the ancient ways. They were the first to whom the gods revealed the secret language, which, again, is no mere human invention but exists in the very sinews of the structure of the cosmos. Because of their strength and consistency of character (that is to say, their resistance to a universalizing Hellenism), they have preserved the old names and are therefore closer to the divine than the Greeks.

Iamblichus singled out two nations for their preservation of the gods' true names: the Egyptians and the Assyrians. That he would claim the Egyptians as having great antiquity and spirituality is not surprising at all. The Greeks had thought of them as a repository of ancient wisdom for many years, as we noted. But that he included the Assyrians in this group is somewhat odd. The Assyrians, as far as I am able to determine, were not especially marked by Neoplatonists before Iamblichus as a people wise in divine matters. Iamblichus for

some reason elevated their spiritual potency up to the level of the ancient Egyptians.

Precisely whom Iamblichus meant to indicate by the designation "Assyrian" is somewhat unclear. The term Assyria technically refers to a region in the upper Tigris which enjoyed a successful imperial past in the Bronze Age and had a later history as a Roman province under Trajan. However, in practice we find many departures from this technical usage. Herodotus uses the designations "Assyrian" and "Syrian" interchangeably (7.63), and both terms refer generally to peoples of the upper Near East between the Mediterranean and Babylonia, including the Phoenicians (2.12,158-9), the Cappadocians (1.72), and the Jews of Palestine (2.104). Virgil uses Assyrian as an adjective for the Phoenician city of Tyre, calling the purple dye for which Tyre was famous, "Assyrium venenum." (*Georgics* II.465). In probably the second century C.E., Dionysius Periegetes (V.975) labels as "Assyrians" the residents of Pontus, on the Black Sea, and Cappadocia. Lucian, who was born in the second century in Samosata only 200 km Northeast of Iamblichus' birthplace identifies himself as an Assyrian. Finally, the fifth-century epic poet Nonnos calls the Libanus mountain range in Lebanon, the "Assurios Libanos" [Ἀσσυρίος Λιβάνος]. (*Dion.* 41.19) This wide variation in usage of the term should make us weary of trying to fix, in any precise way, the language that Iamblichus wishes to promote. However, it is not too much to say that, whichever tongue Iamblichus has precisely in mind, he claimed for one of the languages that could be understood as belonging to the region of his birth (perhaps Syriac) a special quality which the international language of Hellenism sadly lacks. In the streets of Rome, then, the adjective "Assyrius" would have equally well fit whatever language Iamblichus has in mind and Iamblichus himself.

Iamblichus, in this case, took a strong interest in the "local" over and above the "imperial" or the "international." This stance is precisely the opposite of Porphyry's. Iamblichus opted away from the universal and toward the particular. It is *there* Iamblichus asserted that one will find spiritual power and salvation—not in disembodied reason, but in tradition embodied in physical, palpable sounds and writing, god-given and preserved by those humans who have the wisdom to resist the latest human mind-games and to recognize the divine when they see it.

Constructing Identities and the Stakes of Hellenism

In his *Life of Pythagoras*, Iamblichus reiterated a specific interest in the intellectual and cultural value of Syrian traditions. He repeated the

standard claim that Pythagoras traveled all over the Mediterranean to learn from the wise men of various regions. Iamblichus' list includes Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria [Συρία]. Interestingly, Iamblichus especially qualified Pythagoras' Syrian visitation by telling us that he went there to learn their secrets not at all from any kind of superstition [δεισιδαιμονία], but because Pythagoras had a genuine desire for contemplative knowledge [θεωρία], and his Syrian hosts, apparently, had true wisdom to impart (*V.P.* 3.14). This seems to be a case of special pleading on behalf of Iamblichus' native people and provides corroborating evidence that he held a stake in how the wider Hellenistic philosophical community (the audience for his writing) would view the region of his birth. The defensive tone is also evidence that some of Iamblichus' contemporaries did indeed consider Syria to be the kind of place where people are "superstitious."

Such cultural lines between Greeks and non-Greeks, as we saw, were also very sharp on Porphyry's side of the issue, though he valued them in precisely opposite ways. As we have seen, he specifically wondered why Greeks, a group with which he clearly identifies, do not just use their own names [τὰ οἰκεῖα ὀνόματα] for each god instead of using foreign ones imported from the βάρβαροι. Porphyry's designation of the Greek names he prefered as οἰκεῖα helps us get a handle on the issues at stake. As well as being a standard designation of what belongs to "US" as opposed to some other "THEM," the adjective οἰκεῖος also designated something that is proper or in line with a given local situation, and something that is natural, that is, sanctioned by the larger natural world (or φύσις) and the principles that govern its operation. The natural opposition (so to speak) of τὰ οἰκεῖα ὀνόματα with τὰ βάρβαρα ὀνόματα captured nicely the kind of elisions that are common in cultural chauvinisms of many varieties. It conflated what are really three separate things: the natural, the proper, and one's own way of looking at the world. There is no question where Porphyry's cultural affiliations lie.

Perhaps most telling in this context, we should also note their respective treatment of their own names—that most intimate of identity markers. Porphyry found a Greek equivalent to his Phoenician name "Malkas," while Iamblichus kept the name of his birth, transliterated into Greek characters, which must have sounded strangely Eastern in Rome.[14] Interestingly enough, each philosopher treats his own name in precisely the manner he thinks appropriate for the

[14] See Dillon, 864.

divine names. In Porphyry's view, his Phoenician name "Malkas," which means king, refers to the notion "king," which has a universal presence for all peoples. This notion is equally expressible in other languages, and he chooses a Greek term for the royal purple as his name. Iamblichus has refused such translation, and maintains his "home" designation, steady and consistent.

To what, then, can we attribute the difference in their cultural self-identifications—Iamblichus' chauvinistically non-Greek, Porphyry's chauvinistically Greek? The older scholarly narrative chalked up such differences to Iamblichus' Syrian origin. However, Porphyry's background, as it turns out, qualifies him as being every bit as much a "Syrian" as Iamblichus'. Porphyry was born at Tyre, a city administratively Syrian since Alexander and at Porphyry's time the principal city of the Roman province of "Syria Phoenice." Iamblichus was born barely 200 km away in the town of Chalcis, located 50 miles south and east of Antioch. Given the general way in which the designations "Syrian" and "Assyrian" were used in Greek and Latin, both these locations, considered geographically, could have equally well carried these labels. But it is also true that both thinkers had an equally strong ground to claim a "Greek" legacy for themselves. They were equally anchored in the traditions of Hellenism, steeped in Greek philosophy from Plato and Aristotle through the Stoics, wrote only in Greek (so far as we know) and identified themselves as inheritors to the mantle of Greek philosophy. Porphyry and Iamblichus were the most influential heirs to Plato of their respective generations, a reputation they carried in many centers of learning throughout the Roman empire, including such bookish places as Athens and Alexandria. They were also natives of a region which after the third century received a boost in prestige, relative to the ruling center in Rome, after "Elagabalus" from nearby Emesa—a town situated almost directly between Tyre and Chalcis—ascended to the imperial throne in 218. Neither of these figures then had only a "provincial" background to understand for themselves and either could have claimed to be truly citizens of the broader Roman world of Greek letters.

But if we can speculate for a moment, we might find some clues to help us sort out their differing positions. Iamblichus was born in the smaller, inland town of Chalcis, while Porphyry hails from a provincial capital with a rich cultural history. Alexander conquered the wealthy city of Tyre only after a long siege of seven months. The severely depleted population was at that time replaced entirely by Greek colonists. Iamblichus' Chalcis is a different story. We have very few references to the place. Strabo claims that the whole area East of Apamea, which would include Chalcis, is a back-country wasteland

(II.1). Diodorus, however, does mention Chalcis as a city wealthy enough to have an army, but says it is on the edge of desert. Jerome chose the region near Chalcis as a place to which he could retire to live the life of a hermit. Any communication, he tells us, had to be done in "barbarian speech" (*Ep.* 5.1, 7.1-2, 15.2). Many Tyrians certainly spoke Greek.

Being from a more rural, less cosmopolitan city than Porphyry, perhaps Iamblichus felt a greater affiliation to his local region and less to a cosmopolitan universalism. Equally important, Iamblichus' colleagues and audience would have been more likely to apply such stereotypes to him, and Iamblichus would have then had to contend with and negotiate them more intimately than Porphyry. Their later lives bear out such a view. Porphyry spends nearly all of his later years in Rome, with relatively brief absences. By contrast Iamblichus, after his schooling in Rome, founds his own school back near his town of origin, in the suburbs of a more cosmopolitan place, the Greek city of Apamea—founded by the Seleucids. Such a view also nicely matches the social dynamic that Peter Brown has traced from the 4th through the 6th centuries in the relations between Syrian cities and villages.[15] Brown suggests the deep fissure between the Hellenized cities and the Syriac-speaking villages. Their interactions were rare to the point of being non-existent. Brown suggests the holy man as a figure who performed a rare mediating role. Iamblichus' larger career fits this role, in a pagan context, though Iamblichus is not bringing city culture to the desert, but desert spiritualism to the Hellenistic city. Furthermore, Iamblichus' singling out of Egypt and Assyria as having special holy names also matches the situation Brown has considered. During just Iamblichus' period, the desert cultures of Syria and Egypt are the concurrent locations of the same ascetic movement.[16] In the 4th century, the desert began to beckon many and diverse seekers of enlightenment. Both Christian and pagan innovators on traditional Greek culture answer the call.

Given this evidence collectively, then, it seems likely that Iamblichus is engaged in the kind of practice that David Frankfurter has located among Egyptian holy men in Late Antiquity. Frankfurter has shown that certain of these figures appropriate the stereotype of the foreign wonder-worker that Roman tourists expected of them.[17]

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[15] Peter Brown, "Town, Village and Holy Man: The Case of Syria," in *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 153–65.

[16] Brown, pp. 153-54.

[17] David Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), section 5.3.3.

Iamblichus, perhaps more readily understood as a "Syrian" than Porphyry was, adopts this identity and lives it out, performing, to some extent, the role that a Roman audience would have expected of someone from such an exotic faraway place in the Syrian desert. Porphyry on the other hand, from a place that the Romans knew well as a Greek city with an illustrious past, inhabits the skin of a Hellenized Roman citizen. It is important to remember that, given their backgrounds, either imagined identity, or combination, was available to Porphyry or Iamblichus. Their distinct affiliations reveal the porous borders between such identities in a time of great cultural interconnection. These identities are also part and parcel of each of their larger philosophical projects.

The work of Michel Tardieu suggests that Iamblichus' reorientation of Neoplatonic thinking toward the desert was a success.[18] Following on Iamblichus, several Neoplatonists undertake journeys into the Syrian desert, looking for (of all things) the remnants of classical Greek culture—at a time when "Hellenism" was coming to mean not the "Greek" as opposed to the "non-Greek" but "pagan" as opposed to "Christian." Proclus, Isidore of Alexandria, Damascius, and Simplicius all make voyages into the back country of Syria in search of a remote past. They locate, for example, the true location of the river Styx on the Arabian plain about 30 km east of the Sea of Galilee. One source characterizes a pilgrimage made to the site as a journey to witness the "miracle" [θαῦμα] celebrated by Homer.[19] In Tardieu's compelling view, the excursion is a voyage to a place where classical wonders are "still visible (that is to say not Christiainized) in a lost corner of the Syrian countryside in the Roman province of Arabia." To sum up: "Pays refuge de la religion, la bordure du désert offrait aux philosophes les seuls vestiges d'une présence encore visible des dieux dans les prodiges de la nature." Iamblichus' life, Tardieu claims, provided them with a model.[20]

The debate between Iamblichus and Porphyry (which Iamblichus decisively won) marks a decisive turn in the development of Platonism, though perhaps not the straightforward descent into magic that Dodds had envisioned. We see here encapsulated a pivotal historical moment, when the fortunes of "Hellenism" took a serious turn. No longer the dominant voice of imperial cities, Greek philoso-

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[18] Michel Tardieu, *Les paysages reliques: Routes et haltes syriennes d'Isidore à Simplicius*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses, vol. XCIV (Paris: Peeters, 1990). I thank Fritz Graf for the reference.

[19] Tardieu, p. 43

[20] Tardieu, p. 15

phy started to inhabit, quite literally, the margins and fringes of the Greek society it had once captivated. From Iamblichus' position, the attractions of the local and the parochial were plain to see. It was there, off in the desert, that the future lay. The language of universals, perhaps the *sine qua non* of Platonism, had to come to terms with nuance, in a way that it had never been forced to before. Greek language was until Iamblichus' time the cultural universal that correlated inconspicuously with philosophical universals. It would now have to contest with new universals, embodied in Constantine and a new dispensation, with which it was unfamiliar.

Reason, Spiritual Ascent, and Hellenism

But we can ask yet another question of these enfolded cultural and intellectual developments. We might revisit Iamblichus' expressions of his own cultural affiliations. Is Iamblichus' critique of Greek culture as "enamored of innovation" an argument from an insider or an outsider? That it follows so closely on Plato's *Timaeus* argues strongly that we should consider it an insider's critique. We should also place this in context with the wider corpus of Iamblichus' writings, where he betrays very little interest in either Syrian or Egyptian customs, languages, or beliefs. Like most of the Egyptian references in the *de Mysteriis*, they amount to not much more than he could have gathered from reading standard Greek-language sources like Manetho, Polybius, Diodorus Siculus (e.g., I.86-92), and Philostratus. We should also keep in mind the forest and not get lost in the trees. Iamblichus is far from trying to establish among his readers a flourishing cult of Isis or of Adad. Far from it. His project instead is to renew and save Greek philosophy, by uniting its various voices under the broad outlines of Pythagoreanism and Neoplatonism. With this more synthetic program he hoped to provide a stable tradition to attract and maintain the devotions and energies of his fellow Hellenists at a time when figures like Mithras and Jesus were competing strongly for their attention. While it remains deeply ironic, it is perhaps no wonder, then, that the follower of Julian the Apostate who penned apocryphal letters from the emperor's hand to Iamblichus, addresses Iamblichus, and not Porphyry or Plotinus, the "savior [σωτήρ] of the whole *Hellenic* world" and the "universal blessing [τὸ κοινὸν αγαθόν] of the Ἕλληνες."

The debate between Porphyry and Iamblichus highlights the fact that reason and unreason (whether we consider it the irrational or the hyper-rational), already in the early 4th century had a location. With an eerie similarity to the stereotypes present in scholarly discussion

only decades old, the argument between Iamblichus and Porphyry dissolved into an argument over the proper LOCATION for one's spiritual devotions. Their debate boils down to a simpler one: Will we find god *here* or *there*? Do we grant our energies to rational thinking (as Porphyry would have it) or to ritual (as Iamblichus advocates), to contemplation or magic, to the Greek or the non-Greek. In more purely linguistic terms, we might pose their debate in the following way: Does spiritual power belong to Greek language, and contemplation in Greek language, or to foreign languages, and to ritual practices that make use of them? Neither thinker, we should note, seriously challenges the view that Greek is the language of contemplation while foreign tongues are especially suited to rites (though Iamblichus' claim that Pythagoras learned "contemplation" in Syria is counter-evidence). Oddly enough, both for the most part seem to have agreed on the terms of the dichotomy, though they valued them in opposite ways. They operated on the premise that Greek and foreign languages have their own special characteristics on either side of a dichotomy of contemplation [θεωρία] vs. magico-ritual action [θεουργία].

Iamblichus' granting of efficacious power exclusively to non-Greek names bespeaks the mystified visions of an outsider—a *non*-non-Greek—looking in. In this reading, Syria, like Egypt, functions as a place-holder for the exotic unknown to which one turns to find a spiritual dimension that has somehow evaporated from the culture in which one finds oneself living out one's day-to-day life. If we were to recast these dichotomies in contemporary terms, we might summarize one side from Gayatri Spivak, and pose the question, "Can the barbarians speak?"[21] In other words, what is the position of a non-Greek language in a broadly Hellenized world? Can it carry semantic, that is, intellectual content, can it be written down like articulable human language, or does it always veer toward babble—whether toward non-sensical screeching, or toward the more rarefied nonsense of efficacious language? Conversely, on the other side of the dichotomy, we might wonder, paraphrasing J. L. Austin, can the Greeks still "do things with words," or has their language run out of power, lost the mystified moment of coinage, when meanings are stamped, and the world comes under control?[22] Finally, we might

[21] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg, eds. *Marxism and the interpretation of Culture.* (Chicago: Uni of Illinois Press, 1988) p.271-313.

[22] J. L. Austin, *How to do things with words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962)

close by restating the obvious. This whole debate, which determines the fate of Platonism for the next dozen centuries (in Iamblichus' favor) is ventriloquized through Egyptian surrogates. It is as if the West *needs* the East to speak its most ambitious spiritual aspirations for it.

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PART SIX

EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

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THE PRAYER OF MARY WHO DISSOLVES CHAINS IN COPTIC MAGIC AND RELIGION

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Among the extant Coptic texts of ritual power are several texts from the British Library (London Oriental Manuscript 6794; 6795; 6796 [several leaves]) that were parts of a portfolio of texts owned by Severus son of Joanna (or Anna). Two of these texts contain spells for good luck in fishing, on the one hand, and a good singing voice, on the other. The former spell rehearses the stories, or historiolae, of several fishing prodigies in biblical lore, in order that Severus may prove successful with his net. The latter spell invokes supernatural power, in the form of the angel Davithea, with his golden bell and his spiritual guitar, in order that Severus may also prove successful with his voice: "he gives me a voice without hoarseness, which does not crack, without roughness, which glides to the heights, as well as a tongue, breathily babbling, tagging along after each instrument, giving voice to music, which delights the crowd, in the middle of whom I sit. You must encourage and indulge me before my whole audience, just as the voice of David the guitarist resides in the father's tabernacle singing to him. Do not let them watch me exit, but let them bring me back for a fine encore. Let them shut their shops and come to watch my show" (London Oriental Manuscript 6794, 29-39).[1] Perhaps we here come to know Severus son of Joanna, frustrated fisherman and aspiring rock star, sitting with his fishing net but dreaming of the stage, and hoping against hope that he will be discovered soon, if needs be with the help of a supernatural agent.

A third text in this portfolio of spells from the British Library is a prayer of the Virgin Mary to be used to empower the one using the spell, in this case our friend Severus. This prayer of the Virgin Mary, in several forms, is the focus of our attention in this paper. Here Mary is presented as an exalted figure praising God and identifying herself, in prayer, as follows: "I praise [you, I glorify] you, I invoke you today, [God, who is alive] for ever and ever, who is coming upon [the clouds] of heaven, for the sake of the whole human race, Yao

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[1] Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 280.

[Sabaoth] …, [Adon]ai Eloi …. I am Mary, I am Mariham, I am the mother of the life of the whole world, I am Mary. Let the rock [split], let the darkness split before me, [let] the earth split, let the iron dissolve …" (London Oriental Manuscript 6796[2], 9-25).[2] The Virgin Mary thus exhibits the powers and possibilities of the mother and the goddess as manifested in various contexts. Like Eve, Mary is the mother of the living. Like Isis, Mary is the deliverer of those in need, and she can liberate those who are in bondage.[3]

A similar presentation of the Virgin Mary and her prayer of power is now to be found in the recently published Heidelberg Coptic text 685.[4] This text is a parchment codex consisting of 20 pages—that is, 10 leaves or 5 sheets —, which is now part of the manuscript collection of the Institut für Papyrologie in Heidelberg. Several of the Greek and Coptic pieces in the collection have been published, for example by Friedrich Bilabel and Adolf Grohmann, Angelicus Kropp, Hans Quecke, and Viktor Stegemann.[5] A parchment codex

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[2] Cf. Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic*, 283.

[3] Compare Isis in Apuleius of Madaura, *Metamorphoses*, book 11, where she, as *regina caeli*, liberates Lucius from the bondage of his asinine condition and makes him truly human. As the priest of Isis states, a person observing these wonders will say, "Look, Lucius, who is loosed from his prior bonds and rejoices in the providence of mighty Isis, is victorious over his fate" (11.15). Similarly, as Robert Ritner reminded me, note may be taken of Isis in an Egyptian spell entitled "Another spell, for releasing any bandage." The spell reads as follows: "Released is someone released by Isis—Horus was released by Isis from the evil done to him by his brother Seth when the latter killed his father Osiris. O Isis, great of magic, may you release me, may you deliver me from anything evil, bad or ominous, from the influence of a god, the influence of a goddess, (from) a male dead, a female dead, from a male opponent, a female opponent who might oppose themselves against me—just as you were released and were delivered from your son Horus" (in J.F. Borghouts, trans., *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* [Nisaba 9; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978], 49). Also relevant in this regard may be other stories of magical or miraculous release from prison: Acts 5:17-21; 12:6-11; 16:23-29; parallels in ancient literature, e.g. Euripides' *Bacchae* and Josephus' *Jewish War* (see Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971], 380-92). Heidelberg Coptic text 686 also has a spell to liberate a person who is in prison (252).

[4] Marvin Meyer, *The Magical Book of Mary and the Angels (P. Heid. Inv. Kopt. 685): Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrussammlung, N.F., 9; Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 1996). The English translations from "The Magical Book of Mary and the Angels" used in the present paper are taken from this edition.

[5] Friedrich Bilabel and Adolf Grohmann, *Griechische, koptische und arabische Texte zur Religion und religiösen Literatur in Ägyptens Spätzeit* (Veröffentlichungen aus den badischen Papyrus-Sammlungen, vol. 5; Heidelberg: Verlag der Universitätsbibliothek, 1934); Angelicus Kropp, *Der Lobpreis des Erzengels Michael (vormals P. Heidelberg Inv. Nr. 1686)* (Brussels: Fondation égyptologique reine Élisabeth, 1966); *idem*, *Oratio Mariae ad Bartos: Ein koptischer Gebetstext aus den Giessener Papyrus-Sammlungen* (Berichte und

of 16 pages, formerly designated Heidelberg 1686 and originally housed in Heidelberg, was lost since World War II, though it was transcribed and published by Kropp and translated into English in the volume *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power*.[6] (I am pleased to say that the lost codex has now been found, and conversations have now taken place with colleagues in London and Heidelberg regarding the fate of the codex.) This parchment codex may well be related, even closely related, to Heidelberg Coptic text 685, and other texts of ritual power in the Heidelberg collection may also be linked to these two codices. If we group these texts together, we may well have in the Heidelberg collection a library, portfolio, or hoard of texts and spells of ritual power comparable to those from the Hay collection of the British Museum, the so-called "Coptic Wizard's Hoard" of the University of Michigan, and the texts belonging to Severus son of Joanna now in the British Library.

Heidelberg Coptic text 685, or "The Magical Book of Mary and the Angels," is a palimpsest, with the prayer of the Virgin Mary and related spells of ritual power copied as the second text onto the surface of the parchment leaves of the Heidelberg manuscript. The first text, a Coptic lectionary with readings from the apostle Paul, was erased, the parchment leaves were trimmed and fashioned into a reconfigured codex, and the spells of "The Magical Book of Mary and the Angels" were copied onto the erased leaves of the manuscript.[7] "The Magical Book of Mary and the Angels" is a codex of ritual power with a variety of spells and recipes assembled together. Most of the spells and recipes are intended to heal or protect the person employing the spells. The person's name usually is not given. Rather, after the manner of magical handbooks and master texts, this codex usually indicates that the name of the client or practitioner (and sometimes his or her mother) is to be inserted appropriately

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Arbeiten aus der Universitätsbibliothek Giessen, vol. 7; Giessen: Universitätsbibliothek, 1965); *idem*, "Oratio Mariae ad Bartos: Ein koptischer Gebetstext aus den Giessener Papyrus-Sammlungen (P. Jand. Inv. Nr. 9 A. B.)," *Nachrichten der Giessener Hochschulgesellschaft* 34 (1965): 145-80; Hans Quecke, "Palimpsestfragmente eines koptischen Lektionars (P. Heid. Kopt. Nr. 685)," *Muséon* 85 (1972): 5-24; *idem*, "Zwei koptische Amulette der Papyrussammlung der Universität Heidelberg (Inv. Nr. 544b und 564a)," *Muséon* 76 (1963): 247-65; Viktor Stegemann, "Neue Zauber- und Gebetstexte aus koptischer Zeit in Heidelberg und Wien," *Muséon* 51 (1938): 73-87.

[6] Angelicus Kropp, *Der Lobpreis des Erzengels Michael*; Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic*, 323-41.

[7] On the lectionary of Heidelberg Coptic text 685, see Hans Quecke, "Palimpsestfragmente eines koptischen Lektionars," 5-24.

when a spell is recited or copied. Most often a formulaic abbreviation, apparently for *deina deinos*, "NN," is used. Twice, however, a specific name of a client is provided: Joseph son of Paraseu.

Of the spells and recipes in the codex, two dominate by their length: the prayer of Mary in the first half of the codex, and the adjuration of the nine guardian angels in the second half of the codex. The prayer of Mary is preceded by an opening that describes the occasion and purpose of the prayer: "This is the 21st prayer (that) the Virgin Mary spoke (on) the day (of) her falling asleep. It restrains all the powers of the adversary (and) it cures every disease and every sickness, in peace, Amen" (2,1-5). Thereafter the prayer proceeds with words reminiscent of the prayer of Mary from the British Library: "Now Mary lifted up her eyes to heaven, toward God almighty. She said, 'I entreat you today, who exists for ever. I praise you today, Yao, who is coming upon the clouds of heaven, Sabaoth, who is stronger than them all, who exists before all the aeons, before heaven and earth appeared. Heaven became for you a throne, and the earth a footstool for your feet. Listen to me today, through your great, blessed name. Let all things submit to me, for I am Mary, I am Mariham, I am the mother of the life (of) the whole world, I myself am NN. Let the rock split before me today, let the iron dissolve before me today, let the demons withdraw before me today, let the powers of the light appear to me, let the angels and the archangels appear to me today, let the doors that are bolted and closed <open> for me, at once and quickly, so that your name may become my helper and life, whether in all the day or in all the night'" (2,6-3,11).

The prayer of the Virgin Mary from the Heidelberg and London collections belongs to a magical tradition of prayers that sometimes have been called forms of the prayer of Mary "in Bartos." Though scholars continue to debate the meaning of "Bartos," an Ethiopic version specifies that Mary uttered the prayer in a village of Bartos, possibly the Parthians.[8] In addition to the prayer of Mary in the Heidelberg and London collections, versions of the prayer are known from Coptic, Ethiopic, Syriac, and Arabic sources. Some of the closest parallels to the prayer of Mary in the Heidelberg and London collections are to be found in an unpublished Coptic magical text from Cairo, Coptic Museum 4958. This Coptic text, preserved on papyrus, is quite fragmentary, with the small papyrus fragments

[8] Cf. Angelicus Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte* (Brussels: Fondation égyptologique reine Élisabeth, 1930-31), 2.134, 3.220-24; S. Euringer, "Bartos = Parthien?" *Zeitschrift für Semitistik* 7 (1929): 214-16.

strewn arbitrarily between the plates below the larger papyrus pieces. As a whole the manuscript merits scholarly attention: the fragments need to be placed as accurately as possible, the manuscript needs to be conserved, and then the document may be adequately transcribed, translated, and interpreted within the context of the versions of the prayer of Mary "in Bartos."[9]

In some fuller forms of the prayer, which include a historiola or at least a fuller narrative context, the Virgin Mary is said to offer her prayer in order to deliver Matthias (the replacement for Judas Iscariot according to Acts 1:26) from prison. The prayer, then, is said to be so efficacious that the iron fetters dissolved and the prison doors opened. As found in the Heidelberg codex and other sources, however, the prayer of Mary includes little or no narrative context describing Mary's prayer on behalf of Matthias in prison. Instead, the statements of release recall, in a more general way, release from prison: rock is split, iron is dissolved, locked doors are opened (reading *ouōn* rather than the *ouōnh* of the manuscript). This more general sort of release may even apply to the wording of the self-predication near the beginning of the prayer, where the client or practitioner may identify explicitly with Mary and her power: "I am Mary, I am Mariham, I am the mother of the life (of) the whole world, I myself am NN" (2,20-22).

Furthermore, it is also possible that the power to split wood and dissolve iron may have become something of a magical commonplace, attributable to other powers and archons than Mary. Thus in London Hay 10391, a text that resembles the Heidelberg codex in other respects, the Great One, strong in his power, reveals himself as follows: "What do you ask of me today? I shall give it to you. If you ask rock of me, I shall split it; if iron, I shall break it off; … I shall destroy the foundations of the prison" (22-24).[10] If Matthias, or anyone for that matter, needs liberation from shackles, Mary might help, but if Mary is not available, other supernatural safecrackers and rock-smackers might be adjured.

During the summer of 1996, at the Sixth International Coptological Congress meeting in Münster, two responses to a paper I presented on the then unpublished "Magical Book of Mary and the Angels" proved particularly helpful in indicating the geographical

[9] My thanks to Samiha Abd El Shaheed and the staff of the Coptic Museum for allowing me access to Coptic Museum 4958. On Coptic Museum 4958 compare my paper, "Mary Dissolving More Chains in Coptic Museum Papyrus 4958 and Elsewere," forthcoming in the proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden, August 2000.

[10] Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic*, 265.

and chronological extent of use of the magical prayer of Mary.[11] The first response was by Stefan Jakobielski from Warsaw University. Jakobielski, Director of the Polish Archeological Expedition to Old Dongola in the Sudan, connected the magical prayer of Mary to one of the texts uncovered at Old Dongola. As a part of the exploration of Nubian Christianity at Old Dongola, which is located on the Nile River between the third and fourth cataracts, Jakobielski and his colleagues discovered, within the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, a crypt dedicated to Archbishop Georgios, who died in 1113 C.E. and whose crypt is the site of multiple burials and multiple inscriptions in Greek and Coptic.[12] In its appearance the crypt recalls pharaonic pyramids covered within with funerary texts—that is, the pyramid texts—in hieroglyphic Egyptian. The inscriptions here include references to the New Testament gospels, signs from a magical alphabet, magical names, cryptograms, lists of the 24 elders, a SATOR-square, texts describing the dormition of Mary and her reception in heaven, a homily attributed to Euodius of Rome—and a Greek version of the prayer of Mary that resembles the prayer of ritual power we have been surveying. The reference to the date Tobe 21 in a text in the crypt reminds us that in some Coptic and Ethiopic traditions it is maintained that the Virgin Mary died and her soul was assumed into heaven on Tobe 21 (the assumption of her body was claimed to have taken place somewhat later). This factor may explain why the prayer of Mary in the Heidelberg codex is called "the 21st prayer (that) the Virgin Mary spoke (on) the day (of) her falling asleep" (2,1-3).

The second response in Münster was from a Copt, Zakaria Wahba by name, who reported that during his childhood his family used an Arabic version of a prayer of Mary that was very close to the traditional prayer from the Heidelberg codex, and that he also recalled a Coptic church in Cairo that still celebrated the power of Mary who dissolves iron fetters. The reference to the Arabic prayer is not particularly surprising, since Gérard Viaud, in his work *Magie et coutumes populaires chez les coptes d'Égypte*, describes just such a piece, and he also

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[11] Marvin Meyer, "The Magical Book of Mary and the Angels (P. Heid. Inv. Kopt. 685)," pp. 287-94 in Band 2 of *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit: Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses*, ed. by Stephen Emmel, Martin Krause, Siegfried G. Richter, and Sophia Schaten (Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients 6,2; Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999).

[12] Cf. Stefan Jakobielski, "Monastery of the Holy Trinity at Old Dongola—A Short Archaeological Report," *The Spirituality of Ancient Monasticism: Acts of the International Colloquium* (Cracow-Tyniec, 16-19.11.1994), 35-45.

refers to another little Arabic book on the Virgin Mary delivering Matthias.[13]

Armed with the further hint of the ongoing celebration of the power of Mary in Coptic Cairo, Girgis Daoud Girgis and I set out during the summer of 1996 and again during the autumn of 1997 in order to locate, if possible, the church or churches in question.[14] We first located the small Church of St. Mary Who Dissolves the Chains, in Khurunfish, toward Old Cairo, a church that is reached by heading downward through an entrance that leads to a sanctuary with numerous small streams carrying water out. Among the architectural remains in the sanctuary are old pillars and capitals. On the wall along the right aisle of the church is a modern icon, in three panels, by Yousef Girgis Ayad, executed in 1706 A.M. (= 1990 C.E.), featuring Mary the Theotokos freeing Matthias, who is shown striding forth from prison with chains melting off his body. To the left of this central panel Mary is identified as the Theotokos and is shown praying in front of a fortress or prison; to the right Jesus is painted floating among the stars, with two angels, probably Michael and Gabriel, peeking out of heaven. Finger marks all over the glass covering the painting testify to the pious hands of the faithful, and in a Coptic note underneath the painting the artist asks that the Lord remember him as well as his father, mother, and two brothers. We were told that the church celebrates a festival on Baunah 21 (= July 28), during which festival the icon of Mary is paraded through the streets, in a manner somewhat reminiscent of pharaonic temple processions, and the story of her miracle with the chains is retold.

Although we were not allowed to photograph the modern painting in the church, we were taken upstairs to the Convent of St. Mary at Harat Zuwaila al-Khurunfish, where a sister showed us another icon of Mary who dissolves chains and frees Matthias. Actually, what we saw was a print of an icon, the original being at the so-called Hanging Church, al-Muallaqa, the Church of St. Mary built over the Roman fortress in Old Cairo. Along the left aisle of the church is an old painting with scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary on the wall above relics of Keryakous and his mother, Abu Nofer the errant monk, and other saints. The scenes from the life of Mary form a cycle

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[13] Gérard Viaud, *Magie et coutumes populaires chez les coptes d'Égypte* (Saint-Vincent-sur-Jabron: Editions Présence, 1978). I have in my possession a copy of the Arabic book, on the Virgin Mary, that Viaud discusses.

[14] My thanks to Girgis Daoud Girgis, past director of the Coptic Museum, for his valuable assistance during 1996 and 1997.

around the central picture of Mary with Jesus, and they show (from the left) Joachim and Anna, the presentation of Mary, the annunciation, Mary and Joseph with Elizabeth and Zechariah, the nativity of Jesus, the three wise men, the flight into Egypt, Jesus with Mary before her assumption, the assumption of Mary—and, in the upper right corner, prior to the scene of Jesus with Mary before her assumption, Mary praying and freeing Matthias from prison.

Nearby, in Old Cairo, at the Convent of St. George, or Mari Girgis, are housed chains that have nothing specifically to do with the Virgin Mary but that may illustrate the ongoing place of liberation from shackles in contemporary Coptic Egypt. Stories of ceremonies and actions involving chains and liberation from chains are not unusual in Egypt.[15] In a shrine within this Convent of St. George, an iron chain with shackles is displayed against a wall adjacent to an icon of St. George, whose tortures at the hands of the Persian King Dadianos and his 69 fellow kings involved the use of chains, supposedly these very chains. I observed the pious as they paused to place this chain on their necks and hands to kiss it, for, the accompanying legend announces, "This chain is a cause of blessing because it was put on the body of the martyr and on it his blood ran."[16] Touching the chain, it is maintained, can bring miracles and cast out evil spirits. These deeds of power are accomplished, it is added, "by faith," a theological claim known from other texts of ritual power (for example, Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 924).[17]

On the basis of this brief survey of traditions pertaining to the prayer of Mary who dissolves chains, two sets of related questions remain. (1) Given David Frankfurter's observations on historiolae and ritual power, what is the relationship between historiolae and the

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[15] Cf., for instance, Otto F. A. Meinardus, *Christian Egypt, Ancient and Modern* (Cairo: Cahiers d'histoire égyptienne, 1965), 195, on the Church of St. George: "Those suffering from mental diseases were chained for twenty-four hours to the wall in front of the relics. They were given bread and water only, and after the experience they were released as cured!" At the Orange conference Ernest Tune also recalled a similar ceremony he encountered on a trip to Cairo during the 1980s. At a church in Old Cairo (Tune recalls that it may have been the Church of St. Barbara) a priest was officiating at a ceremony with a man who was dressed in a business suit but was also bound with chains, which were subsequently removed from the man.

[16] Cf. also *History and the Biographies of the Great Martyrs Saint George the Roman and Saint George of Alexandria* (Cairo: Convent of St. George, 1995).

[17] Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 924 asks that a woman named Aria be protected from several sorts of fever, and goes on to state, "You shall do these things [graciously] and completely, first on account of your will and also on account of her faith, because she is a handmaid of the living God, and that your name may be glorified continually" (7-13; cf. Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic*, 40).

practice of magic?[18] What accounts for the evolution or the devolution of the linkage between story and praxis in ancient magic, as seen, for instance, in the versions of the prayer of the Virgin Mary? What control, if any, does the historiola exercise over the praxis of magic? What power, what narrative power, does it provide, and what redirection of empowerment occurs with the loss of connection with the story?[19] (2) Given several explorations of magic, ritual power, and issues of taxonomy at the Lawrence conference and in the resultant Brill volume, how do we classify and interpret the texts and acts of power discussed in this paper?[20] I prefer to use the category of ritual power, and to see varieties of manifestation of ritual power arranged along a continuum. The supposed appropriate or inappropriate manifestations of ritual power derive, I suggest, from the perspective of the practitioners, and the practitioners of ritual power who are at the center of political and social power in a group commonly determine who is at the center and who is at the periphery of ritual power, that is, who performs miracles and who practices magic. Hence Mary and the chains are found in Coptic magic, in iconography, and in liturgy, both in the center and on the periphery of religious and social life in Egypt. But beyond these political and social considerations, how, if at all, do we distinguish the magical Mary of texts of ritual power from the miraculous Mary of the Coptic church? Does the historiola, particularly in the larger context of the life of Mary, bestow legitimacy, propriety, and centrality to Mary's acts of power? Does the controlling function of the historiola in the life of the church render the resultant ritual power more manageable and less threatening? Mary still is in control of the chains, but the question remains, who is in control of Mary?

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[18] David Frankfurter, "Narrating Power: The Theory and Practice of the Magical *Historiola* in Ritual Spells," pp. 457-76 in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 129; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995).

[19] At the Orange conference Fritz Graf suggested that at times the historiola might be implied and generally known, though not explicitly recorded.

[20] Cf. especially the essays by Jonathan Z. Smith, Fritz Graf, and Robert K. Ritner, pp. 13-60 in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. by Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki.

THE MAGICIAN AND THE HERETIC: THE CASE OF SIMON MAGUS

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In the *Clementine Homilies*, a Christian pedagogical adventure-story from the third century, an ex-follower of Simon the Magician says of his former master: "he makes statues walk, … he rolls himself on the fire, and is not burned; and sometimes he flies; and he makes loaves out of stones; he becomes a serpent; he transforms himself into a goat; he becomes two-faced…" (2.32.2).[1] As it turns out, the last of these accusations is true, at least for the modern scholar. The figure of Simon Magus has a remarkable two-facedness about it. According to the heresiologists of the second century, he was the first heretic and the father of Gnosticism; while the authors of apocryphal gospels and acts portray him as the charlatan, trickster, and magician *par excellence*. This paper will examine the relationship between the two faces of Simon Magus with a view to understanding the way that some proto-orthodox Christians understood the terms "magic" and "magician."

We first meet Simon in the New Testament book of Acts (8.4-24). He is described as a man from Samaria "who had previously practiced magic in the city" (προϋπῆρχεν ἐν τῇ πόλει μαγεύων) and who was hailed by his followers as "that power from God which is called Great" (ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη Μεγάλη).[2] The reader is told that Simon was baptized and converted to Christianity by Philip while he was still in Samaria. After a somewhat abrupt break in the narrative, Simon sees Peter "giving" the Holy Spirit to the people of Jerusalem through the laying on of hands, and Simon offers to pay for the secret that will allow him to do the same thing. Peter chastizes him, and Simon responds simply by asking the Christians for prayers

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[1] ἀνδριάντας ποιεῖ περιπατεῖν καὶ ἐπὶ πῦρ κυλιόμενος οὐ καίεται, ἐνοίτε δὲ καὶ πέταται καὶ ἐκ λίθον ἄρτους ποιεῖ, ὄφις γίνεται, εἰς αἶγα πεταπορφοῦται, διπρόσωπος γίνεται (Bernhard Rehm, ed., *Die Pseudoklementinen I: Homilien* [Akademie-Verlag, Berlin: 1969], 49). Translations of early Christian writings are my own unless otherwise noted. I would like to extend my gratitude to Lisa Poirier for her help with the Greek sources.

[2] I use NRSV translations for Biblical passages.

on his behalf.[3] The story ends suddenly, and the rest of the New Testament is silent about Simon's fate.

About a generation later, Simon begins to appear in other texts: first, in Justin Martyr's two Apologies, both written around the middle of the second century, and then in Irenaeus' *Against The Heresies* and Hippolytus' *Refutation of All Heresies* between the end of the second century and the middle of the third. By this point, the character has been christened Simon *Magus*: Simon "the Magician." He is depicted as the father of all heresies and the inventor of labyrinthine and hopelessly misguided Gnostic theologies. The reader who only knows Simon from the New Testament might be surprised at the complexity of the "Simonian" theological systems that are described by Irenaeus and Hippolytus. After all, the role of magic is hardly primary in Acts 8, and Simon's philosophical views make no appearance there at all. Like his humble acceptance of Peter's admonishment, and like his inability to give the Holy Spirit to those whom he baptizes even at the end of the story, Simon's "shady past" as a magician appears to serve simply as a way to emphasize his inferiority to the Christian apostles.

Not so in the minds of the heresiologists. Simon is portrayed as the powerful and deadly force behind every heresy at work in the authors' own times. Justin writes that, during the reign of Claudius Caesar (i.e., 41-54 C.E.), Simon began to travel and preach in the company of a reformed prostitute named Helen. Curiously, Simon is said to have described Helen to his followers as his "first thought," or *ennoia*, which is a very prominent concept in later Gnostic writings. Justin goes on to urge his audience (which ostensibly includes the emperor Antoninus Pius) to take down a statue that has been erected on the Tiber in Simon's honour and to which his devotees pay homage (*First Apology*, 26).[4]

Irenaeus of Lyons, writing around the year 180, adds a few details to Justin's account. He writes that Helen, the "first thought" or *ennoia* that Justin mentioned, was described by Simon as "the Mother of all things." She was conceived by Simon (who thought of himself as

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[3] An informative discussion of this story can be found in Morton Smith, "The Account of Simon Magus in Acts 8," in *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, vol. II (American Academy for Jewish Research, Jerusalem: 1965), 735ff. A more recent analysis can be found in Susan Garrett's *The Demise of the Devil: Magic and the Demonic in Luke's Writings* (Fortress Press, Minneapolis: 1989).

[4] On the statue, see Robert Casey's article on "Simon Magus" in F. J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, eds., *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. 5 (Macmillan, London: 1933), 154-155.

God) as a means by which all of the angels could be created. The angels, however, rebelled and began to pursue Helen, chasing her from body to body with the desire to violate her sexually. Eventually she resigned herself to the life of the prostitute in Tyre that Simon (in a human form) had to rescue from her fate. Simon claimed that his reunion with his *ennoia* would provide salvation for all of his followers (*Against the Heresies*, 1.23.1-4).[5] Incidentally, Irenaeus is the first author to form an explicit connection between Simon Magus and the Simon of the New Testament; although it is likely that Justin had the Simon of Acts 8 in mind when he wrote his *First Apology*, he appears to draw all of his details about Simon's life from other sources.

About half a century later, the bishop Hippolytus provides his readers with a more detailed look at Simon's philosophy. To this end, he quotes at length from a document entitled the *Great Announcement*, purported to have been written by Simon himself (*The Refutation of All Heresies*, 6.11.1-19).[6] The cosmogony that is laid out in this text is extremely complex, and a detailed discussion of it is not necessary for my purposes.[7] Suffice it to say that Simonian theories—including those which state that fire is the originating principle of the universe (6.9.3), and that Eden is really the womb (6.14.7), and that Simon can be associated with the god Jupiter and his companion Helen with the goddess Minerva (6.20.1)—might well make the orthodox Christian reader feel very far from familiar theological territory.

But Justin, Irenaeus, and Hippolytus each take care to point out that Simon, for all of his philosophizing, is still a magician. Justin complains that Simon "did mighty works of magic, and beguiled many people, and still keep[s] them deceived" (*First Apology* 56.1).[8]

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[5] A delightful article on the development of the Helen myth is Dennis R. MacDonald's "Intertexuality in Simon's 'Redemption' of Helen the Whore: Homer, Heresiologists, and *The Acts of Andrew*" in *The Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 1990* (Scholars Press, Atlanta: 1990), 336-343.

[6] I refer to the edition prepared by Miroslav Marcovich, *Hippolytus: Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (Walter de Gruyter, New York: 1986), 216-228. Note that some earlier editors of the *Refutation* number the chapters differently; this section can be found in 6.6-6.14 in those editions.

[7] There is a great deal of scholarly literature which focuses on the relationship between the Simon tradition and Gnosticism; the *Great Announcement* is usually discussed in that context. For a summary and bibliography, see Wayne Meeks, "Simon Magus in Recent Research," in *Religious Studies Review* 3 (1977), 137-142.

[8] οἳ [i.e. Simon and his student Menander] καὶ μαγικὰς δυνάμεις ποιήσαντες πολλοὺς ἐξηπάτησαν καὶ ἔτι ἀπατωμένους ἔχουσι. In Miroslav Marcovich, ed., *Iustini Martyris: Apologiae Pro Christianis* (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin: 1994), 113.

According to Irenaeus, Simon's followers

> perform magic, each of them in whatever way they can. They make use of exorcisms and incantations. Philtres too, and love-charms, and so-called familiars, and dream-senders (*AH*, 1.23.4).[9]

Hippolytus repeats these accusations (*Refutation*, 6.20.1), and then goes on to add a postcript about the end of Simon's life. He writes that Simon invited his own followers to dig a ditch in which to bury him alive, claiming that he would rise on the third day. "He remained there to this day," Hippolytus sneers, "for he was not the Christ" (*Refutation*, 6.20.3).[10] Blending descriptions of Simon's heresy with accusations of "magical" practices in this way is an approach that was eventually to be followed by almost all of the heresiologists who follow these three, and legends about Simon's exploits continued to be written well into the Middle Ages.[11]

It seems obvious that Hippolytus could not have filled thirteen chapters of his heresiology with a complicated emanationist philosophy that he made up out of whole cloth. One would have to be quite cynical about the sources to suggest that versions of these religious systems were not in currency *some*where; otherwise, our authors would have been left with very little about which to complain. The question then becomes: how could these heresiologists, writing a century and a half after the events depicted in the New Testament, associate the character in Acts with the "Simonian" cults that they saw around them?

Scholars have provided a number of different possible answers to this question. Some maintain that the first-century Simon was deified after his death, which is why his name remained on the lips of his followers so many decades later.[12] Others suggest that there may have

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[9] "[M]agias autem perficiunt, quemadmodum potest unusquisque ipsorum. Exorcismis et incantationibus utuntur. Amatoria quoque et agogima et qui dicuntur paredri et oniropompi" (Adelin Rousseau and Louis Doutreleau, eds., *Irénée de Lyon: contre les hérésies*, vol. 2 [Editions du Cerf, Paris: 1979], 318).

[10] ὁ δὲ ἀπέμεινεν ἕως νῦν · οὐ γὰρ ἦν ὁ Χριστός. This section is numbered 6.15 in earlier editions of Hippolytus' text.

[11] Authors who wrote about Simon include Tertullian (*On the Soul*, 34.2-4), Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History*, 2.1.13f, 2.26, 4.7, and 4.22), Epiphanius (*Panarion*, 21.1-6), Pseudo-Tertullian/Victorinus of Pettau (*Appendix Against All Heresies*, 1.2), and Filaster (*Diversarum Haereseon Liber*, 29.1-9).

[12] Emile Amann is a well-known proponent of this view; see his entry on "Simon le magicien" in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. XIV (Paris 1903-50), 2130-2140.

been two different Simons whom the heresiologists confused with one another.[13] Still others, following the famous Tübingen school of the nineteenth century, claim that Simon was actually a fictitious character designed by a Jewish-Christian sect to act as a parody for St. Paul.[14] The question of whether any of these Simons "really" existed is less important for my purposes than the question of why these Christian writers associated the fickle convert portrayed in Acts with the very real threats that they perceived in the proliferation of Gnostic sects that surrounded them.[15] More important still is the question of why this character was consistently and repeatedly portrayed as a magician. The answers to these questions start to appear in the other sources that refer to Simon, that is to say, the sources that concern themselves less with theology and more with miracle-working.

The extant stories about Simon are quite colourful. They often pick up on the theme, already visible in Acts 8, of comparing his "magic" (unfavourably, of course) to the true miracles that the apostles perform. Hippolytus' story about Simon's failed attempt at a Christ-like resurrection has already been mentioned. The apocryphal *Acts of Peter* goes on at some length describing various contests between Simon and Peter, including one event where Simon kills a boy through magic and Peter outdoes him by raising the same boy from the dead.[16] In the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions*, Simon is said to have died after breaking his thigh in a botched attempt to fly. [17] Arnobius of Sicca, in his work entitled *Against the Heathen* from the same time period, says that Simon committed suicide after breaking

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[13] Such as Robert M. Grant, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*, rev. (New York, Harper and Row: 1966), 75. For an interesting theory that a magician mentioned in Josephus is actually the Simon of whom the heresiologists speak, see H. Waitz, "Simon Magus in altchristlichen Literatur" in *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenchaft* (1904), 127f.

[14] The first proponent of this view was F.C. Baur in his article "Die Christuspartie in Korinth," in *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie* (1831). For a discussion of the Tübingen school and its critics, see G.N.L. Hall's article on "Simon Magus" in James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. XI (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons: 1921), 514-525.

[15] A relatively recent discussion of the "search for the historical Simon" can be found in K. Rudolph, "Simon—Magus oder Gnosticus? Zum Stand der Debatte," in *Theologische Rundschau* 42 (1977) 279-359.

[16] Chapters 23ff. See Wilhelm Schneemelcher and R. McL. Wilson, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*, rev., vol. II (Westminster/John Knox, Louisville: 1989), 271-321.

[17] Book 2, section 3.14. See F.X. Funk, ed., *Die Apostolischen Väter: griechisch-deutsche Parallelausgabe* (J.C.B. Mohr, Tübingen: 1992).

his leg in an even more dramatically botched attempt to ascend to Heaven in a flaming chariot.[18]

This tradition of storytelling makes Simon's use of illusions and conjurations into a central part of his identity, and an equally central part of his imagined relationship to the Christians who surrounded him. For the writers and readers of these accounts, a very sharp distinction needed to be drawn between magic and miracle; this distinction served to remind Christians that what they were doing was not temporary, illusory, or petty like "magic." This point is made explicit in the *Clementine Homilies*, noted earlier, and the closely related set of stories known as the *Clementine Recognitions*. After being asked the entirely reasonable question of how to tell the "signs" of magicians apart from true miracles, the apostle Peter is made to answer:

> "For tell me, I pray you, what is the use of showing statues walking, dogs of brass or stone barking, mountains leaping, flying through the air, and the like, which you say that Simon did? The things which are of good are directed to the welfare of men. Such are those which our Lord did, who made the blind see and the deaf hear, raised up the feeble and the lame, drove away sicknesses and demons, raised the dead, and the like, as you see me do too" (*Recognitions* 3.60).[19]

Peter does not mention that Simon also claimed that he had "produced many new sprouts from the earth, and made them bear leaves and produce fruit in a moment," or that he could order a sickle to reap ten times more quickly than a human could;[20] nor does he draw attention to the fact that Jesus walked on water and cursed a fig

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[18] Book 2, chapter 12. See C. Marchesi, ed., *Arnobii Adversus Nationes Libri VII* (Corpus Scriptorum Latinorum Paravianum, Turin: 1953). An English translation can be found in George E. McCracken, tr., *The Case Against the Pagans* (Newman, Westminster: 1949), 125.

[19] "Nam dic, quaeso, quae utilitas est ostendere statuas ambulantes, latrare aereos aut lapideos canes, salire montes, volare per aerem, et alia his similia, quae dicitis fecisse Simonem? Quae autem a bono sunt, ad hominum salutem deferuntur, ut sunt illa quae fecit dominus noster, qui caecos videre fecit, surdos audire, debiles [et] claudos erexit, languores et daemones effugavit, mortuos fecit resurgere, et alia his similia quae etiam per me fieri videtis." A parallel speech is found in *Homilies* 2.34, which can be contrasted with Simon's claims to make loaves from stones in the passage cited at the beginning of this paper.

[20] "Cum mater mea Rachel iuberet me exire ad agrum, ut meterem, ego falcem videns positam praecepi ei ut iret et meteret, et messuit decuplo amplius ceteris. Multa iam nova virgulta produxi de terra et connaream ego feci sub momento temporis apparere" (*Ibid.* 2.9). Nowhere is Peter made to deny that Simon actually was capable of any of the feats in the long list that is provided in this chapter, although he is careful not to assert the stories' veracity either.

tree—hardly philanthropic miracles.[21] If he were pressed on his definitions, there is little that Peter could say about *objective* differences between miracles and magic, even as they are portrayed in his own story.[22] Peter cannot be faulted for this; indeed, modern scholars have had the same difficulty.

Another, subtler attempt to differentiate magic from miracle can be found in Hippolytus' *Against All Heresies*. Immediately before he begins his explication of Simonian philosophy, Hippolytus tells a brief story about a Libyan magician named Apsethus. Apsethus trained some parrots to announce "Apsethus is a god," and then set them free. People going about their daily business would then hear the birds speaking about Apsethus, and in their astonishment, they would come to the conclusion that Apsethus really was a god. However, a clever Greek, having figured out the magician's trick, captured a number of the parrots and trained them to say "Apsethus, having caged us, compelled us to say, 'Apsethus is a god.'" When they heard this new announcement, the people who had been duped decided unanimously to burn Apsethus (6.7.2-6.8.4).

"This is how we must think concerning Simon the magician," Hippolytus writes. "If . . . the sorcerer was the subject of a passion similar to that of Apsethus, let us endeavour to re-educate Simon's parrots: Christ was not Simon" (6.9.1).[23] For Hippolytus, then, Simon's followers were simply caged birds squawking phrases that they were trained to say, while Christians had developed genuine philosophical insight about the way the universe worked. Presumably, the right thing to do at this point would be to teach Simon's parrots the truth about Jesus. However, it is not clear just how far Hippolytus would have been willing to take this metaphor: are parrots not still parrots, no matter who trains them?

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[21] It has been pointed out that the devil challenged Jesus to make bread out of stones in Luke 4.1-13 (parallel in Matthew 4.1-11); this might make the "usefulness" of the miracle described in *Homilies* 2.32 seem suspicious to orthodox readers.

[22] C.K. Barrett maintains that the difference that Christians saw between themselves and magicians was that magicians greedily charged money for their services ("Light on the Holy Spirit from Simon Magus" in J. Kremer, ed., *Les Actes des Apôtres*, [Leuven University Press: 1979], 288f). Money is certainly an important theme in Acts 8, and throughout Luke's work; however, it has less prominence in the Clementine literature. I will treat Christians' willingness to do their miracles free of charge as a subset of their general desire to be philanthropic with their "magic."

[23] Οὕτως ἡγητέον ⟨τοὺς⟩ Σίμωνα τὸν μάγον […] εἰ […] ὁ μάγος πάθος τι παραπλήσιον Ἀψέθῳ, ἐπιχειρήσομεν μεταδιδάσκειν τοῦ Σίμωνος τοὺς ψιττακοὺς ὅτι Χριστὸς οὐκ ἦν Σίμων. Earlier editions of the *Refutation* number this section as 6.4.

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In the final analysis, for the heresiologists and the storytellers alike, Jesus' miracles come from God and Simon's do not. Whether a given event counts as a miracle or as a magical practice can therefore only be answered in the context of "Who did it?" and "Whom does the doer serve?". However, one can only answer the second question if one understands the theology of the person who is being investigated. Hence the heresiologists' intense scrutiny of the Simonians' religious beliefs: if Simon's followers consider their human leader a god, then their actions—whatever those actions may be—quite simply do not belong in the realm of genuine prayer or miracle.

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to suggest that Simon's theology provided the "base" target for these Christian authors' attacks, and that the accusations about magic served merely to embellish or entertain. The Clementine documents and the apocryphal gospels and acts are not primarily theological treatises; rather, they are mostly concerned with proving the supremacy of Christian teaching through rather transparent morality tales. Within the context of those tales, Simon's status as a *magos* is his primary defining characteristic, and the dangers associated with it are taken quite seriously. Yet even these texts emphasize the absurdities that their narrators see in Simon's philosophies about issues such as creation or salvation.[24] The priorities are reversed here, but the symbiotic relationship between magic and heresy remains: in other words, for all of Simon's spellcasting, he's still a bad philosopher.

It is important not to lose sight of the fact that Roman authorities may well have considered Simon's sect Christian. To some extent, the same can be said of the heresiologists as well: something must be Christian, at least to some degree, to qualify as a heresy. Simonian attitudes about the creation of the universe through fire may not seem very Christian to the post-Nicene reader, but the holders of those beliefs probably considered themselves Christian, and the Emperor to whom Justin's book was addressed almost certainly did. Justin writes: "All those who take their opinions from these people . . . are called Christians, just as also those philosophers who do not share the same views are yet all called by one common name of philosophy" (*First*

[24] The argument between Simon and Peter about the nature of sin, which can be found in *Homilies* 19.15 and *Recognitions* 3.21, may serve as an example.

Apology, 26.6).[25] Justin goes on to register his frustration with the fact that "real" Christians are persecuted by Roman authorities while Simonians are allowed to preach their heresies unmolested. Simon's followers are thus portrayed as being doubly dangerous: first, because they can be confused with Christians, and second, because that confusion does not last long enough to bring persecution upon them.

Of course, the irony of the whole situation is that one of the most frequent accusations that was levelled against Christians was that *they* practiced magic. Their mysterious meals, their nighttime vigils, their scorn for Roman gods, their "miracle-working": these suspicious activities were among the reasons why Roman authorities outlawed the religion in the first place.[26] It is therefore no surprise that authors like Justin Martyr were especially sensitive about accusations from that quarter; by this point, there was already a long history of miracle-workers who wished to distance themselves from magicians and quacks, but the need to do so for these Christians must have felt particularly urgent.

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The subject of "magic" has been attracting a great deal of scholarly attention during the past thirty years or so. At this conference, scholars from around the world are revising outdated conceptual models, and testing each revision with care. I would like to conclude my own study, first by drawing attention to one important contribution to the lively debate about magic in the ancient world—namely, David Aune's 1980 article entitled "Magic in early Christianity"[27]—and then by venturing a suggestion as to how the case of Simon Magus may refine that model.

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[25] ⟨Καὶ⟩ πάντες οἱ ἀπὸ τούτων ὁρμώμενοι, ὡς ἔφημεν, Χριστιανοὶ καλοῦνται, ὃν τρόπον καὶ οἱ οὐ κοινωνοῦντες τῶν αὐτῶν δογμάτων ⟨ἐν⟩ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις τὸ ἐπικατηγορούμενον ὄνομα τῆς φιλοσοφίας κοινὸν ἔχουσιν. Translation by Leslie W. Barnard, in *St. Justin Martyr: The First and Second Apologies* (Paulist Press, New York: 1997).

[26] A fine introduction to the issues involving the accusations of magical practices that were levelled against Christians can be found in Morton Smith's *Jesus the Magician* (Harper & Row, New York: 1978). Stephen Benko's article entitled "Pagan Criticism of Christianity During the First Two Centuries A.D.," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* II.23.2 (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin: 1980), 1055-1118, is also helpful.

[27] In *ANRW* II.23.2, 1507-1557.

Aune argues that magic should be defined as a *kind of religious deviance*, much in the same way that lawbreaking in other contexts would qualify as social deviance.[28] An action is therefore not magical unless it is placed outside of the realm of the acceptable in the minds of the dominant religious group. The fact that individual laws change from culture to culture does not make "law" an indefinable term, and there are some elements that many cultures' laws have in common. So the term "magic" may be salvageable even though it is impossible to define any single action (withering a fig tree, for instance) as intrinsically magical, as opposed to miraculous or something else entirely.

I think that the case of Simon Magus shows how useful Aune's formulation is, not only when considering practices that are compared between religions (e.g., Christians and pagans), but also for those that are compared within a religious tradition (e.g., Simon and Peter). In spite of—or perhaps even because of—the marginalization of their religion by Roman society at large, Christians of the second and third centuries felt the need to draw their own religious boundaries carefully.

Simon's uncomfortable intimacy with his opponents was part of the reason why their attacks against him were particularly venomous. In their struggles to make their own religion seem legitimate and rational, Christians had to be very precise about whom they would consider part of their camp. The language of heresy was developed in order to exclude troublesome philosophies like Simon's. Troublesome actions, imagined or real, were then dismissed as magic, because that was the language with which such actions had been dismissed for centuries.

It is unfortunate that the vocabulary of action does not share the nuances that the vocabulary of belief does: while terms like "heretic" and "schismatic" and "apostate" and even "member of another religion" each serve to describe the credal and institutional orientation of an Other, the term "magician" is forced to denote all of the danger-

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[28] In a classic article entitled "Sorcery, Demons, and the Rise of Christianity from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages" (in Mary Douglas, ed., *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations* [Tavistock Publications, New York: 1970], 17-45), Peter Brown discusses ways in which this sort of deviance could be particularly alarming to inhabitants of the Roman Empire. Although he is concerned with a slightly later time period than the one that serves as the focus for this paper, I believe that many of his observations can be applied to an analysis of Christians in the second century.

ous things that those Other people *do*.[29] It is my hope that scholars like the ones gathered at this conference will be able to hear the different ways that the word "magician" was used in the ancient world, so that we may all learn more about the religious and social topoi inhabited by unusual people like Simon and his parrots.

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[29] Ancient Greek was much better at distinguishing between different kinds of magic than modern English is. For an introduction to the terms *goes*, *magos*, and *theourge*, see Fritz's Graf's summary in *Magic in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press: 1997), 20-29.

ANCIENT EXECRATION MAGIC IN COPTIC AND ISLAMIC EGYPT

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To what extent can the folklore of modern Egypt be traced back across the centuries to pharaonic times? This question has never been adequately answered before, to a great extent because the disciplines involved in the study of the history and culture of Egypt are traditionally defined by religions, languages and rulers, with a focus on one time period—pharaonic, Greco-Roman, Christian, Islamic or modern. In spite of their expertise in only one of these periods, scholars have nonetheless made varying and sometimes contradictory assumptions about the continuity and change of Egyptian culture between time periods with which they are familiar and those which they know very little. Some believe little has changed, while others believe the culture has been completely transformed. Moreover, these assumptions have not been questioned systematically to determine the extent of continuity and change of Egyptian culture.

More specifically, the question of the dependence of Arabic magic practices in Egypt on their ancient counterparts has received only brief attention in several articles.[1] The literature on the subject has

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[1] A. Fodor, "Traces of the Isis Cult in an Arabic Love Spell from Egypt," in *The Intellectual Heritage of Egypt: Studies Presented to László Kákosy by Friends and Colleagues on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, U. Luft, ed. (*Studia Aegyptiaca* 14; Budapest: La Chaire d'Égyptologie, 1992) 171-86; A. Fodor, "Arabic Bowl Divination and the Greek Magical Papyri," in *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Popular Customs and the Monotheistic Religions in the Middle East and North Africa: Budapest, 19-25th September 1993*, A. Fodor and A. Shivtiel, eds. (*The Arabist* 9-10; Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University Chair for Arabic Studies & Csoma de Körös Society Section of Islamic Studies) 73-101; A. Fodor, "Sufi Magic—Greco-Egyptian Magic," in *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Logos, Ethos, Mythos in the Middle East & North Africa (L E M) -Part Two- Budapest, 18-22 September 1995*, A. Fodor and A. Shivtiel, eds. (*The Arabist* 18; Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University Chair for Arabic Studies & Csoma de Körös Society Section of Islamic Studies, 1996) 1-11; E. Gaál, "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 27 (1973) 291-300; D. Pingree, "Some of the Sources of the Ghåyat al-Óak^{a}m" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 43 (1980) 1-15; P. W. Schienerl, *Dämonenfurcht und böser Blick: Studien zum Amulettwesen* (Aachen: Alano-Verlag, Edition Herodot, 1992) 7-33; D. Wortmann,"Neue magische Texte" *Bonner Jahrbücher* 168 (1966) 56-110.

the potential to be multiplied, especially with the recent proliferation of studies on ancient magic that could serve as a starting point for diachronic research.

In particular, in his recent study of ancient Egyptian execration, Robert Ritner has convincingly shown that execration praxis remained virtually unchanged for 4000 years of ancient Egyptian history, and therefore this work provides a useful baseline for comparison with later material that forms the focus of the present paper.[2] Drawing upon a variety of textual, archaeological and ethnographic sources, I intend to demonstrate the continuity of the mechanics of execration practice in Egypt in later times, while showing that the ancient religious beliefs in which the practice has been couched have been recast by magic practitioners in terms of the two subsequently dominant religions in Egypt, Christianity and Islam.

Various sources indicate that execration has usually been carried out by magicians, and not by just any individual,[3] based on consultation of written instructions that have remained in constant use for centuries. Thus it would not be unreasonable to expect that a ritual carried out 600 years ago consulting the manuscripts to be discussed would not vary significantly from a ritual based on consultation of the same or a similar manuscript today. The Arabic manuscripts, in turn, were probably culled from even earlier sources.

The first manuscript to be examined in this article is the Shams al-Ma´arif al-Kubra, attributed to one of the most famous Arab Muslim magicians, Ahmad bin Ali al-Buni, although it has been suggested to be a pseudepigraphic work composed during the early 14th century C.E.[4] Whoever its compiler may have been, the book appears to be of a composite nature from a variety of sources, some

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[2] R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice.* (*Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 54; Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1993).

[3] Ibn Khaldun, *Prolégomènes d'Ebn Khaldoun: Texte arabe publié après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale par M. Quatremère.* Vol. 3 (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1858) 128-29; W. Vycichl, "Un royaume dans un pot de lentilles. Une histoire de magie copte recueillie en 1936 à Farchout (Haute-Égypte). L'origine du mot hik 'magie'," in *Mélanges Adolphe Gutbub* (Montpellier: Université de Montpellier, 1984) 235.

[4] 'Alya' Shukrī, *Al-Turāth al-Sha'bī al-Masrī fi al-Maktabāti al-'Ūrūbiyya* [= *Popular Egyptian Culture in European Bookstores*] *Contemporary Sociology* 24 (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb Publishers, 1979) 287.

[5] P. Lory, "La magie des lettres dans le Shams al-Ma'arif d'al-Buni," *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 39-40 (1987-88) 98-99.

of which have already been identified as Persian[5] and others as Jewish.[6] Today it continues to be reissued, consulted and sold throughout the Arab world and beyond.[7]

The second group of instruction texts to be examined in this paper comes from an Arabic Coptic Christian manuscript utilizing the Psalms of the Bible as the formulae. It has been suggested to be Mamluke in date, and a fragmentary parallel manuscript is dated to 1713-14.[8] The primary edition of the manuscript from which I will quote was obtained by one of its editors during the early 1970s in Akhmim.[9]

My own translations of these texts follow, and each has been given a number which will be used for reference purposes later in this article. The first is from al-Buni's text:

> [Text 1] If you want to cause an enemy or oppressor to suffer ophthalmia, then take a ball of wax and fashion from it an image depicting whoever you want and draw the seal[10] on it with the name of the desired person and his mother. Gouge out the eyes of the figurine with two thorns and place it in a black pot in which there is unslaked lime. Sprinkle a little run-off of the bath on it and bury the pot near a blazing fire. Thus the one against whom the magic is worked screams, "The fire! The fire!" and his eyes are irritated to the point that he can barely see a thing and he calls for help because of the severity of the pain. Do not leave it for more than seven days for the one against whom the magic is worked will die and you will be held responsible for it on the day of judgment. If

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[6] J. Somagyi, "Sur quelques éléments juifs et pseudo-juifs dans l'encyclopédie magique de Bûnî" in *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume*, S. Lowinger and J. Samogyi, eds., vol. 1 (Budapest: Globus Nuomdai Müntézet, 1948) 387-92.

[7] I was able to purchase a copy of the book without any difficulty from one of the booksellers near Al-Azhar in Cairo in March 1998. The work has been translated into Ge'ez and is used as far west as Senegal; cf. C. Hamès,"Taktub ou la magie de l'écriture islamique," *Arabica* 34 (1987) 320-21.

[8] N. H. Henein and T. Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes: Édition et traduction d'un manuscrit arabe chrétien d'Égypte*. (*Bibliothèque d'Études Coptes* 12; Cairo: IFAO, 1975) 2. For the fragmentary manuscript, see A. Khater, "L'emploi des Psaumes en thérapie avec formules magiques cryptographiques," *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 19 (1967-68) 123-76; however, evidence exists which suggests that Arabic variants of the text may have existed as early as the 11th century C.E.

[9] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes*, x-xi.

[10] This seal follows after this group of texts in the manuscript. For the meaning of the seal in Islamic magic, see H. A. Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere in der muhammedanischen Zauberei* (*Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients* 7; Berlin und Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1930) 110-14.

> you want to cure him, then remove the image and drop it in water and he will be cured, God willing.[11]

The striking similarity of this text to the single execration figurine excavated from an Islamic site in Egypt has been noted by its publishers.[12] Found in an unspecified location at Fustat, the city founded by the Arab conquerors of Egypt, the yellow wax figurine representing a man was found in a black ceramic pot. The pot was covered with a thin piece of wood and sealed with lime. The wooden cover was pierced with two holes through which a white thread was passed, the end of which was attached to the right leg of the figurine. Its left leg and arms appear to have been deliberately broken off, and were found wrapped in a piece of cloth in the jar.[13] Five rose thorns pierced it at the level of the eyes, ears and forehead, while its neck appeared to have been slashed with a vertical gash. Suspended by the thread, the figure's head brushed against a mass of slaked lime which filled about a third of the pot The figurine itself was at some point wrapped in cloth which has left an impression on the wax. On the back of the figurine was written the victim's name, and he was identified as the son of Adam and Eve.[14] The pot also contained burnt bits

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[11] Aḥmad Ibn Al-Būnī, *Kitab Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā wa Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*, vol.1 [= *First Volume of the Book of Major Sciences and Finest Disciplines of Learning*] (Cairo: ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad Publishers, 1874) 82. All of the other versions of this text which I have looked at leave out the line "and you will be held responsible for it on the day of judgement." French translations of other variations of this text can be found in C. Bachatly and H. Rached, "Un cas d'envoûtement en Égypte" *Bulletin de la Société Royale de Géographie d'Égypte* 17 (1934) 179, and E. Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Alger: Typographie Adolphe Jourdan, 1909) 299; a German translation is found in Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere in der muhammedanischen Zauberei*, p. 76.

[12] Bachatly and Rached, "Un cas d'envoûtement en Égypte". The following description is based on this article, as well as a personal examination of the jar and its contents in 1998. I would like to thank Farouk S. Asker, general director of the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo for permission to examine the objects, and his staff for their assistance and photographs.

[13] In a modern case of love magic, the figurines are wrapped in cloth; Y. Senn-Ayrout, "La magie et sorcellerie dans l'Egypte ancienne, leurs survivances ans l'Egypte actuelle," *Cahiers d'histoire égyptienne* 6 (1954) 73.

[14] Bachatly and Rached, "Un cas d'envoûtement en Égypte". On the back of the figurine the victim is identified as the son of Adam and Eve. On Babylonian Jewish magic bowls, Adam and Eve are also mentioned. It has been suggested that this identification was necessitated by the fact that certain would-be humans might actually be the offspring of either Adam or Eve and a demonic partner; cf. B. A. Levine, "Appendix: The Language of the Magical Bowls," in *A History of the Jews of Babylonia*, J. Neusner, ed., vol. 5 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970) 343-75, esp. 351-52.

of the fabric which wrapped the figurine, a bit of onion skin,[15] a date pit and a large bread crumb. Unfortunately, besides the comparison with the text, it is difficult to date the object securely.[16] A magician in Gurna in Luxor in the earlier part of this century also reported a variation on this—he would place a figurine whose eyes were pierced with thorns in a jar of lime, and that this would result in the victim becoming blind after seven days.[17]

Al-Buni's book contains several other examples of the execration ritual:

> [Text 2] If you want to paralyze part of a person, then seal the seal on wax in the name of whomever you want and fashion his image. Draw the seal on it with a knife whose handle is made from it [i.e., the wax]. Strike any part of the image desired and therefore that part will be paralyzed because of it immediately.[18]
>
> [Text 3] If you want to tie the sleep of whomever you want, then fashion his image from wax, draw the seal on it, fasten it in the waistband of your trousers, and tie the legs of the trousers together. Therefore the one against whom the magic is worked cannot sleep as long as the trousers remain tied.[19]
>
> [Text 4] If you want to harm someone or bring him sadness, grief and worry, then take a long-necked jar in the name of whomever you want and the name of his mother, and draw the seal on it after you draw the picture of the desired one on it. You place a little water, sulfur, pepper and oil in the jar and place it on a fire between two stones. Therefore you give grief, worry, sickness and illness to the one against whom the magic is worked.[20]

The following are from the Arabic Coptic Christian manuscript:

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[15] There is a belief in Egypt that stepping on an onion skin can bring trouble; cf. Muḥammad Maḥmūd Al-Jawharī, *Al-Dirāsa al-ʿIlmiyya lil-ʿādāt wa al-Taqālīd al-Shaʿbiyya- Al-Juz' al-Thānī min dalīl al-ʿAmal al-Maydānī li-Jāmi'ī al-Turāth al-Sha'bī* [= *The Scientific Study of Popular Traditions. Volume 2 of the Fieldwork Index of the Collectors of Popular Culture*] (Alexandria: Dār al-Maʿārif al Jāmi'iyya Publishers, 1993) 119.

[16] Based on the palaeography of the inscription and/or the ceramic type, the staff of the Museum of Islamic Art suggested dates that ranged from the 5th or 6th century A.H., or roughly the 11th to 13th centuries C.E., in other words, prior to the date of al-Buni's text.

[17] E.-J. Finbert, *Le Nil: fleuve du paradis* (Paris: Fasquelle, 1933) 46.

[18] Al-Buni, *Kītāb Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā wa Laṭā'if al-ʿAwārif*, 82; cf. translation in Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 61-2.

[19] Al-Buni, *Kītāb Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā wa Laṭā'if al-ʿAwārif*, 82; cf. translations in Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* 61-2, and Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere in der muhammedanischen Zauberei*, 76.

[20] Al-Buni, *Kītāb Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā wa Laṭā'if al-ʿAwārif*, 82; cf. translation in Winkler, *Siegel und Charaktere in der muhammedanischen Zauberei*, 76-77.

[Text 5] Psalm 48: If you want a person to be sickly, write it [i.e., the psalm] on an unfired potsherd and bury it in the fire of a mudbrick hearth and then draw the image of the individual and therefore he will wheeze in good time.[21]

[Text 6] Psalm 55: Write [the psalm] on a sheet of copper on Tuesday at the time of Mars and draw on it an image of a woman who you want to hemorrhage, while making it [i.e., the image] in wax. You bury it in an irrigation canal running towards the east. Therefore she will hemorrhage.[22]

[Text 7] Psalm 78: If it [the psalm] is written with the blood of a Nile catfish from the well of a spring on a white piece of paper, and you wrap a red silk thread around it, and you place it in a pierced new red clay jug, and you put the end of the red thread through the hole, and you seal the mouth of the jug and you bury it under a watercourse [running] to the east and you write at the end the psalm, "Run blood of 353[23] (meaning the name the woman you want to hemorrhage) just as the waters run on this writing." Then as a result she hemorrhages and it does not cease until the jug is removed from the canal.[24]

[Text 8] Psalm 96: If it [the psalm] is written on a piece of wax in the name of the person whom you want and the name of his mother and you say, "O Lord, just as I am angry at this image, may you be angry at so-and-so, son of so-and-so (f.)" and bury it in a tomb that is not visited.[25]

[Text 9] Psalm 103: If you have enemies that you fear, then take frogs equal in number to them and tie the frogs' forelegs behind their backs with a red silk thread. You read the psalm seven times over each one, and you write the name of the enemy on their backs before you read. After that, you put them in a new red earthenware vessel, write these letters [i.e., magical characters which follow in the manuscript] on the pot, seal

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[21] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes,* 40 (Arabic), 53 (French). Another seemingly more complete version of the manuscript is translated into French by G. Viaud, *Magie et coutumes populaires chez les coptes d'Égypte.* (Saint-Vincent-sur-Jabron: Editions Présence, 1978) 133, #665 (no Arabic version is given), and it seems to indicate that the picture is to be drawn on the sherd after it has been burned.

[22] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes,* 44 (Arabic), 56 (French).

[23] The significance of the number 353 here is unclear. Odd numbers are said to be used to injure in Arab magic (cf. T. Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," *Berytus* 4 [1937] 69-110, esp. 105), but this number is of no particular significance in Arabic magic. In Greek magic, the sum of the letters of the name Hermes is 353 (A. S. Hunt, "The Warren Magical Papyrus" in *Studies Presented to F. Ll. Griffith,* S. R. K. Glanville, ed. [London: Egypt Exploration Society, Oxford University Press, 1932] 233-240, esp. 239) but in all likelihood this is purely coincidental.

[24] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes,* 60 (Arabic), 69 (French).

[25] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes,* 68 (Arabic), 76 (French). This text seems incomplete, lacking a clause stating the desired result of the magic.

it with white potter's clay, and bury it in a forgotten tomb. You will see wonders, God willing.[26]

When one compares the preceding texts and figurine with the instructions found in ancient Egyptian and Greek papyri as well as earlier archaeological remains of execration figures, it becomes obvious that the practice has changed little in 5000 years, with regards to the substances used to make the figurines, the tortures to which they are subjected, and the places in which they are deposited.

In the Arabic texts, we see a variety of objects used to represent the victim: wax, a potsherd, a jar, paper, copper, and a frog. The most common substance used to make the figurine is wax. Often, the figurine is burned, as in text 1 and the figurine from Fustat, and as reported in an ethnographic account from the 1920s.[27] By virtue of the destructive nature of burning itself, the ancient archaeological evidence of the use is limited,[28] but is well-attested in ancient texts.[29] However, some of the ancient Egyptian and Greek texts indicate that burial of wax figurines or placement in water was also possible, similar to texts 6 and 8 respectively.

The equation of the victim with a pot (text 4) or a potsherd (text 5) on which his picture has been drawn has precedents in ancient times as well. In at least one case, bowls on which the names of the victims were written took the place of figurines.[30] Similarly, on ancient stelae to protect against animal bites, the gods were petitioned to seal their mouths and to make them like potsherds in the street.[31] An oracular decree meant to protect a child from potential causes of death included "death by potsherd,"[32] while an unbaked potsherd appears twice among the corpus of Greek magical texts from Egypt as the

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[26] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes*, 72 (Arabic), 79-80 (French).

[27] W. S. Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt: Their Religious, Social and Industrial Life To-day with Special Reference to Survivals from Ancient Times* (London: Harrap, 1927) 196-97; fig. 119 is a photograph of two such figurines, male and female, fashioned from wax.

[28] G. Posener, *Cinq figurines d'envoûtement* (Bibliothèque d'Étude 101; Cairo: IFAO, 1987) 10; R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 163.

[29] For an overview of the use of wax in ancient Egyptian desctructive magic, see M. J. Raven, "Wax in Egyptian Magic and Symbolism," *Oudheidkundig Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* 64 (1983) 7-47, esp. 24-26.

[30] K. Sethe, *Die Ächtung feindlicher Fürsten, Völker und Dinge auf altägyptischen Tongefässscherben des mittleren Reiches* (*Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-Hist. Klasse 5*. Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1926).

[31] R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 151.

[32] R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 152.

medium on which to write a spell.[33] In modern Egypt, when an unwanted guest departs, a pot is often smashed behind him to ensure that he never returns.

The vast majority of figurines that survive from antiquity and were made from unfired clay or mud, when found in situ, were found in cemeteries,[34] but just like burned wax, if they had been submerged in water as has been reported in the ethnographic literature,[35] we probably would not expect to find them in the archaeological record.

Text 7 utilizes a white piece of paper in place of a figurine, which is associated with the victim by writing her name on it. The ethnographic literature also contains reports of the making of paper dolls, or simply pieces of paper in special geometric shapes, to harm someone.[36] There are no archaeological parallels for this from ancient times, because a figure made from papyrus could hardly have survived the ritual described in several execration texts preserved in Egyptian papyri which called for making figures of the kings' enemies on new papyrus (which would have been white) on which their names were written.[37]

In text 6, it seems that the figure is made from copper, while perhaps a wax figure is made simultaneously. The making of two

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[33] PGM XXXVI.189 (see H. D. Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*. [2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992] 274) and PGM XLVI.5 (see Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation,* 282); the second of these, although fragmentary, seems to be an example of hostile magic.

[34] For a list of examples, see Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*,172; to this list can be added a bronze figurine dating to the Hellenistic period (cf. F. W. von Bissing, "Hellenistische Bronzen aus Ägypten," *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen Institutes in Wien* 15 [1912] 76-80, esp. 79-80). One group was made from fired clay; Posener has argued that the names inscribed on them were applied after firing, although the evidence is not conclusive, see G. Posener, "Les empreintes magiques de Gizeh et les morts dangereux," *Mitteilungen des deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 16 (1958) 252-70,esp. 254-55.

[35] Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt: Their Religious, Social and Industrial Life*, 197.

[36] A. Chélu, "Magie et sorcellerie. Étude de moeurs égyptiennes," *Bulletin de l'Union Géographique du Nord de la France* 12 (1891) 1-22, esp. 17.

[37] S. Sauneron, *Les fêtes religeuses d'Esna* (*Esna* 5; Cairo: IFAO, 1962) 25; S. Sauneron, *Le temple d'Esna* (*Esna* 3; Cairo: IFAO, 1968) 15-16, no. 199; R. O. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum No. 10188)* (*Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* 3; Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1933) line 23, 6; line 26, 3; line 26, 2; and line 28, 16; R. O. Faulkner, "The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-III" *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 23 (1937) 166-85, esp. #289, p. 168, 171-172, 174; R. O. Faulkner, "The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-IV," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 24 (1938) 41-53, esp. 42; S. Schott, "Drei Sprüche gegen Feinde," *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 65 (1930) 35-42, esp. 41-42.

figures out of different substances simultaneously is attested in the ancient texts as well.[38] While no copper figurines have been excavated, nor are they mentioned in any texts, the Egyptian god Seth, who was associated with evil and often the victim of the execration ritual, was said to have been slain with copper. In the Greco-Roman period copper was specified as the material for making needles or nails to pierce execration figures.[39]

Wild animals and figures of them were often closely associated with foreign enemies in ancient Egypt,[40] and thus could be used to represent an enemy in the execration ritual. In particular, the PGM foreshadows the role frogs play in Arabic texts. In one case, the tongue of a frog is trampled,[41] while another text, which has a number of other parallels in the Arabic texts, identified the victim with a frog.[42] Another animal that often was involved in the execration ritual was the fish.[43] In one ancient text, figurines were said to be placed in fish skin.[44] In another case, the name of the victim was inscribed, using a fish bone on the chest of a wax figure representing him.[45] In a text from Esna Temple, the victims were identified with the fish.[46]

Blood could also be used as a component in the manufacture of execration figurines. In text 7, fish blood is used to write on the piece of paper. In one ancient text, cattle blood was said to be mixed with

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[38] One ancient execration ritual text calls for drawing a figure of the victim on papyrus as well as making his image out of wax (Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind [British Museum No. 10188]*, line 23, 6; line 26, 3; line 26, 20; and line 28, 16; Faulkner, "The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-III" 168, 171-172, 174; Faulkner, "The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-IV" 42). Another calls for making a figurine out of wax or earth and writing his name on papyrus (S. Schott, "Drei Sprüche gegen Feinde," 41-42).

[39] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 166.

[40] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 160, esp. n 743.

[41] PGM X.38-39 (see Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 150).

[42] PGM XXXVI.231-55 (see Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 274-75).

[43] J. Leclant, "La 'Mascarade' des boeufs gras et le triomphe de l'Égypte," *Mitteilungen des deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 14 (1956) 128-45, esp. 141 n 6.

[44] S. Schott, "Totenbuchspruch 175 in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," *Mitteilungen des deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 14 (1956) 181-89, esp. 185.

[45] R. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 173.

[46] Sauneron, *Les fêtes religeuses d'Esna*, 25; Sauneron, *Le temple d'Esna*, 15-16, no. 199.

the wax used to make the figurines, or rubbed on the figurine itself,[47] and red ink was commonly used to write the name of the victim on the figurine.[48]

An essential part of execration is subjecting effigies of the victim to various forms of mutilations and tortures; those that continue include binding, cutting and piercing, drowning, and burning.

The most common form of binding involves tying the hands and the arms behind the back; this posture is attested in the oldest extant representation of the execration motif and continues throughout Egypt's ancient history.[49] This posture is reflected in text 9, in which the frogs' forelegs are tied behind their backs.

Sometimes the binding is combined with suspension. The frog in the Greek text mentioned previously was supposed to be hung up from a reed.[50] In text 7, the paper was suspended in a pot by a thread in running water; a Greek text suggests a similar practice with the bad things desired being written on a lead lamella suspended by a cord in a stream or bath drain. As in text 7, the effect could be negated by removing and untying it.[51] The figurine excavated at Fustat had a thread wrapped around its chest, while being suspended upside down by its foot.[52] Suspension by the foot means that the figure would be placed upside down, a posture that was quite commonly said to be inflicted upon enemies and the damned in ancient Egyptian thought and represented in art,[53] and upside-down demons

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[47] Schott, "Totenbuchspruch 175 in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," 185-86; in another text, a tendon of a red cow is bound to the figurine (cf. Schott, "Urkunden mythologischen Inhalts. Bücher und Sprüche gegen den Gott Seth," [*Urkunden des aegyptischen Altertums* 6; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1929] 4-5, 36-37). Red is the usual color of the ancient execration figurines, whether wax or clay (Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147). For the negative associations of the color red, see G. Posener, "Les signes noirs dans les rubriques," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 35 (1949) 77-81, esp. 77-78.

[48] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147. Often the word "green" or "fresh" is used ephemistically to mean "red" (G. Lefebvre, "Rouge et nuances voisines," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 35 [1949] 72-76, esp. 72-73). This should be kept in mind as some translators translate it "fresh ink."

[49] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 113-19.

[50] PGM XXXVI.236-40 (cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 275).

[51] PGM VII.436 (cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 129).

[52] This figure provides an explanation for the pierced jug through whose holes were passed the thread that wrapped around the paper. In effect, the paper would be suspended inside the jar.

[53] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 168-71.

are still believed to haunt the Egyptian countryside.[54] Indeed, one Greek execration text from Egypt actually called for placing a figure upside down in a pot of water.[55]

As indicated in text 2, striking a particular part of the figurine with a knife is meant to harm that part of the victim's body. The ethnographic literature contains reports of attacking execration figurines with knives, needles, pins, sharp palm leaf points, or nails.[56] In the figurine from Fustat and in text 1, rose thorns are used. The stabbing of enemies with knives played an important role in ancient Egyptian mythology,[57] and similar tortures are well attested in the ancient textual and archaeological record.[58]

Ancient texts called for dismembering the figurine with a knife.[59] As with the figurine from Fustat, loose arms and legs were found in ancient caches of execration figurines as well.[60]

Placing the figurines in a jar is one of the most distinctive features of the Egyptian execration ritual. Not only were enemies and evil beings said to be in jars in ancient Egyptian texts,[61] but there also have been several pots excavated that contained one or more execration figurines.[62] Just as is called for in texts 7 and 9, the pot in one Greek text is specified as a new one.[63] All of the ancient examples of pots used for execration that have been found were red; in text 1, the pot called for is a black one, like the one excavated at Fustat. While there is no evidence that black pots played a part in the ancient

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[54] As reported by Omm Sety in an unpublished manuscript in the possession of the present author.

[55] PGM CXXIV.10-40 (cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 321).

[56] B. A. Donaldson, "The Koran as Magic," *The Moslem World* 27 (1937) 254-66, esp. 261; Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt: Their Religious, Social and Industrial Life*, 197; Chélu, "Magie et sorcellerie. Étude de moeurs égyptiennes," 16-17.

[57] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 163-67.

[58] Schott, "Urkunden mythologischen Inhalts. Bücher und Sprüche gegen den Gott Seth," 44-45; Posener, "Les empreintes magiques de Gizeh et les morts dangereux," 257; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 166.

[59] Schott, "Urkunden mythologischen Inhalts. Bücher und Sprüche gegen den Gott Seth," 4-5, 46-47.

[60] Posener, *Cinq figurines d'envoûtement*, 10; Y. Koenig, "Les textes d'envoûtement de Mirgissa," *Revue d'Égyptologie* 41 (1990) 101-25.

[61] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 175-76.

[62] A. M. Abu Bakr and J. Osing, "Ächtungstexte aus dem Alten Reich," *Mitteilungen des deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 29 (1973) 97-133, esp. 97; J. Osing, "Ächtungstexte aus dem Alten Reich (II)," *Mitteilungen des deutschen Instituts für Ägyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo* 32 (1976) 133-85, esp. 133-34.

[63] F. Maltomini, "I Papiri Greci," *Studi Classici e Orientali* 29 (1979) 55-124, esp. 98 and 112.

execration ritual, the color black does make an appearance in two ancient execration texts, where it was said that black hair or thread was used to bind the figure.[64]

Ritner has noted that burial, particularly in cemeteries, is the sole unifying characteristic of all ancient execration figurines found in situ.[65]

While two of the Arabic texts do call for burial of the figure in a forgotten tomb,[66] the action of putting the figurine in the fire in text 5, and in water in texts 6 and 7 is referred to using an Arabic verb meaning "to bury" (dafana). The ancient texts indicate that immersion in water or burning were other options, which would have destroyed the evidence for the placing of figurines in places other than the cemetery, and even when burned or submerged, the figurines may still have been conceptualized as being buried. For instance, one ancient text calls for the burial of the figurine in the place of execution.[67]

We are reliant on texts for ancient evidence of placing figurines into water. The fish in the text from Esna Temple mentioned earlier were thrown in a canal at the end of the ritual.[68] A Greek text called for placing the figurine in a pot filled with water.[69] Likewise, two of the Egyptian Arabic texts (6 and 7) call for placing the figurine in a pot and burying it in a canal running toward the east,[70] Blackman reported that placing clay figurines in water is only done in cases where the death of the victim is desired.

Bath water is sprinkled on lime in text 1 in order to produce a caustic eye-irritating reaction. Bath water is a common element in the Arabic magic texts, including this very same manuscript,[71] and the

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[64] Schott, "Totenbuchspruch 175 in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," 185-86; Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum No. 10188)*, 26, 3; Faulkner, "The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus-III," 171.

[65] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 172-73.

[66] The "forgotten tomb" is said by Doutté to be common in Islamic magic; the one text he gives in support of this assertion comes from a magical manuscript from Egypt (Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 225, 303).

[67] Schott, "Totenbuchspruch 175 in einem Ritual zur Vernichtung von Feinden," 187.

[68] Sauneron, *Les fêtes religeuses d'Esna*, 25; Sauneron, *Le temple d'Esna*, 15-16, no. 199.

[69] Maltomini, "I Papiri Greci," 98, 112.

[70] Cf. PGM XXXVI.239-40 (cf. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*, 275), where the frog is strung up on the east of the practitioner's property.

[71] Al-Buni, *Kītāb Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā wa Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*, 81.

Christian one as well.[72] This practice is not one found in native ancient Egyptian magic, for public baths were introduced to Egypt by the Greeks,[73] and baths were commonly thought to be haunted by evil spirits throughout the Greek world.[74] This idea persisted in Egypt until at least the early part of this century.[75] The first evidence for the role of the bath in magic in Egypt is a bilingual Demotic/Greek love magic text, while other Greek and Coptic texts utilize bath water, drains, and furnaces.[76] A Coptic text involved burying water of the bath and wild mustard at the door of the house of the person to be destroyed.[77]

The use of the bathhouse furnace as a place for burning execration figurines and magical amulets was well known in Demotic, Coptic and Greek texts.[78] Older temples may have had furnaces devoted solely for this purpose.[79] The burning of figurines had been called for in ancient execration ritual texts as well.[80] Fire continued to play an important role in three of the Arabic texts (1, 4, 5).

As can be seen from the evidence, almost all elements of post-pharaonic execration have antecedents in earlier times, whether in the substances used in making figurines, the mutilations to which they

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[72] Henein and Banquis, *La magie par les psaumes: Édition et traduction d'un manuscrit arabe chrétien d'Égypte*, 113; Viaud, *Magie et coutumes populaires chez les coptes d'Égypte*, 60.

[73] The earliest baths found in Egypt are at Sais and were built in the 5th or 6th century B.C.E. for the use of the local Greek colony, on which, see W. Kolataj, *Imperial Baths at Kom el-Dikka*. (*Alexandrie 6*; Varsovie: Centre d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences, 1972) 14 n 20.

[74] C. Bonner, "Demons of the Bath," in *Studies Presented to F. Ll. Griffith* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, Oxford University Press, 1932) 203-08.

[75] E. W. Lane, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London: East-West Publications, 1978) 224; M. Meyerhof, "Beiträge zum Volksheilglauben der heutigen Ägypter," *Der Islam* 7 (1917) 307-44, esp. 317-18.

[76] J. H. Johnson, "The Demotic Magical Spells of Leiden I 384," *Oudheidkundig Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* 56 (1975) 29-64, esp. 44-45 (I, 13).

[77] A. M. Kropp, *Ausgewählte koptische Zaubertexte*. 3 vols. (Brussels: La Fondation Égytologique Reine Élisabeth, 1931) I.61; II.47.

[78] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 158-59. It is interesting to note that the lower part of a bathhouse furnace at Karanis may have doubled as a kiln for terra-cotta figurines (S. A. A. El-Nassery, G. Wagner, and G. Castel, "Un grand bain gréco-romain à Karanis," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 76 (1976) 231-75, esp. 232.

[79] J. Leclant, "Fouilles et travaux en Égypte et au Soudan," *Orientalia* 39 (1970) 320-74, esp. 329; Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 157-58.

[80] Schott, "Urkunden mythologischen Inhalts. Bücher und Sprüche gegen den Gott Seth," 48-49.

are subjected, or in the place in which they are deposited. On the other hand, the original function and the religious background in which the ritual is couched has not remained so static.

Execration did not remain solely as state-sponsored magic. Carried out as part of regular temple ritual, it gradually would have been adopted by priests for private use. With one exception, the evidence for this borrowing all dates to the Late Period and consists of temple texts copied and modified for private use.[81] As a result, Greco-Roman times witnessed a flourishing in the use of the execration ritual for private ends similar to those treated in the Arabic texts. Fowden has suggested that pharaonic magic used in the Greek magical texts from Egypt had already been "render[ed] plausible" for an audience not as well-versed in ancient Egyptian mythology as their predecessors had been by a simplification of the religious elements of the formulae,[82] although Ritner has pointed out that in most cases it simply entailed substituting the Greek equivalent for the name of an Egyptian god.[83] In late antiquity, as many of the new monks bore Egyptian theophoric names, Meyer suggested that they began their careers in the pagan temples before converting to Christianity, taking the magical rituals they had learned in the temples with them to the monasteries.[84] Although this is possible, it is not the only plausible scenario. Although I have focused in this paper on two Arabic magic texts from Islamic and Christian traditions, and their antecedents in Egyptian and Greek texts, there are other texts that suggests a more dynamic interchange of magical praxis between religions and languages which can be expanded to include Jewish traditions. In fact, an Arab author of the 11th century C.E. stated that the magic practiced by Muslims, Christians and Jews was the same because they all used words of unknown meaning and spirits to achieve their goals.[85]

The Egyptian text from Esna temple I mentioned earlier which involved writing the victim's name on a piece of papyrus attached to fishes' mouths has its closest parallel in a Jewish Egyptian magic text, in which a lead lamella inscribed with a spell was inserted into the

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[81] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 206 n 953.

[82] G. Fowden, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) 66-67.

[83] R. Ritner, "Egyptian Magical Practice under the Roman Empire," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2 (18.5): 3333-79, esp. 3367.

[84] M. W. Meyer and R. Smith, eds., *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994) 261.

[85] A. Fodor, *Amulets from the Islamic World. Catalogue of the Exhibition Held in Budapest, in 1988*, (The Arabist 2; Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, Chair for Arabic Studies & Csoma de Körös Society, Section of Islamic Studies, 1990) 2.

mouth of a black dog sealed with wax.[86] In fact, many other parallels to the PGM have been noted in the Jewish manual,[87] and fragments of the manual have been found in Arabic written in the Hebrew alphabet.[88]

A Coptic text that called for burying bath water and wild mustard on the victim's doorstep is clearly echoed in a Syriac Psalter found at the Syrian Monastery in the Wadi Natrun to which a note was added instructing the reader to put mustard-seed and water in a new pot and read the psalm (109) over it for three days, and then pour it out before the door of the enemy, thereby killing him. In fact, this is not the only Syrian Christian text in existence utilizing psalms for magic purposes.[89]

An Arabic text collected in Algeria in the early part of this century calls for placing the spell (a passage from the Quran) written on a red piece of paper in the mouth of a frog, tying its mouth shut with a red silk thread, suspending it upside down in running water by a thread attached to its left leg, and then reading the Quranic verse over it 21 times. The victim will become sick until being upon the point of death, but the effect can be negated by removing the text from the frog's mouth.[90] This text, with the exception of its Quranic verse, is most closely paralleled by our Christian manuscript.

A text from the Cairo Geniza that has been dated to the 11th century suggests another type of transmission. This text, meant to cause a hemorrhage in a woman bears a striking resemblance to our texts 6 and 7, among others. It reads, in Hebrew: "To cause someone hemorrhage. Write on the day of Mars on a blank piece of paper with ink. Bind it in a red silk purse and lay it on a reed. Bury it in a canal running toward the east. This is what you write...". What follows is the psalm, written in Judaeo-Arabic. While the use of the psalms in magic is just as popular in the Jewish tradition as in the Christian,[91] the fact that the instructions are in Hebrew, but the psalm to be

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[86] M. A. Morgan, *Sefer Ha-Razim. The Book of Mysteries* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983).

[87] Morgan, *Sefer Ha-Razim. The Book of Mysteries*, passim.

[88] Morgan, *Sefer Ha-Razim. The Book of Mysteries*, 4-5.

[89] A text from a monastery in Turkey is found in C. Kayser, "Gebrauch von Psalmen zur Zauberei," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesselschaft* 42 (1888) 456-62.

[90] Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 285.

[91] A. Fodor, "The Use of Psalms in Jewish and Christian Arabic Magic," in *Jubilee Volume of the Oriental Collection 1951-76*, É. Apor, ed. (*Keleti Tanulmányok Oriental Studies* 2. Budapest: Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1978) 67-71.

written is in Arabic, suggests that the document was drawn up by someone literate in both languages, copying an Arabic original for the use of someone only literate in Hebrew.[92] The psalm was probably left in its original language because it was felt that it might lose its power to have an effect in translation.[93]

The role of Jewish magicians as receptors and transmitters of ancient magical practice therefore should not be underestimated. A number of texts for love magic from the Geniza collection contain similar, or even identical techniques to those found in the execration texts in Egyptian, Coptic, Greek and Arabic.

With the coming of Christianity, it has been suggested by Rees that the only change was the formulae (the psalms) used and the powers invoked.[94] With the conversion of much of the population to Islam, these same elements were further modified. Quranic verses are included in the formula to be spoken while performing the execration ritual in al-Buni's manual.[95] Quranic verses that contain references to the destruction of evildoers are reported to have been spoken or written to accompany the execration ritual in Egypt, as well as Algeria.[96] Blackman says that the magician would utter incantations at the same time he placed the figurine in water or fire.[97] The Arab historian Ibn Khaldun reported that the magician recited formulas while spitting on the figurine, and that the saliva contained evil spirits that would help to carry out the procedure.[98] These examples are nothing but transformations of the ancient ritual, which involved spitting on the figurine multiple times,[99] while also invoking various gods to carry out the harm which was desired upon the figurine.[100] In text 8, the

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[92] Almost identical instructions, to take a piece of new cloth, put it in a reed pipe, and bury it in the bank of a running river occurs in a solely Aramaic magic text from the Geniza collection, on which, see J. Naveh and S. Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1985) 230-31.

[93] Just as a Northwest Semitic incantation appeared in an ancient Egyptian magic text, on which, see R. C. Steiner, "Northwest Semitic Incantations in an Egyptian Medical Papyrus," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51 (1992) 191-200.

[94] B. R. Rees, "Popular Religion in Graeco-Roman Egypt. II—The Transition to Christianity," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 36 (1950) 86-100, esp. 89.

[95] Al-Buni, *Kitāb Shams al-Maʿārif al-Kubrā wa Laṭāʾif al-ʿAwārif*, 83.

[96] Quran 5:30-33 (cf. Donaldson, "The Koran as Magic" 261); Quran 27:51-53 (cf. Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 285). For the positive use of Quranic verses in magic, see Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," 72-76.

[97] Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt: Their Religious, Social and Industrial Life.* 197.

[98] Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 298-99

[99] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 87.

[100] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 87 n 412.

pantheon is replaced by a single God. In both an Islamic text (1), and a Christian one (9), the ritual is said to be effective due to the will of God. Thus, we see that a virtual web of borrowings between pagan, Jewish, Christian and Islamic magicians are possible routes of transmission. This said, it is hardly surprising that sometimes Christian Egyptians visit Muslim magical practitioners, and vice versa,[101] just as members of the two religions venerate each other's saints.[102]

The transmission of these magical practices across the ages has proceeded in spite of the prohibitions against them. In ancient times, the execration ritual was seen as essential for maintaining the proper functioning of the Egyptian state.[103] Evidence coming from a royal perspective indicates that in ancient Egypt execration was acceptable if used by the king's magicians against his enemies, but was not permitted to be used *against* the king.[104] Both Islam and Christianity officially disapprove of the practice of execration. In discussing a Hebrew magical text from Egypt, Morgan postulated that the praxeis adopted from the Greek and Aramaic tradition were "provided with a cosmological framework intended to make them appear as legitimate Jewish practices."[105] They would not be considered legitimate Jewish practices by Jewish theologians, however, and Muslim and Christian theologians would disagree with the suggestion that Quranic verses, Biblical passages or even the intervention of God himself would have any effect in carrying out the desired effects of the magical operations. In his study of magic in North Africa, Doutté singled out execration as being considered the worst type of magic by Muslims, because it combines the practice of magic with the fashioning of images.[106] In fact, it is considered forbidden by Islamic juris-

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[101] Al-Jawharī, *Al-Dirāsa al-'Illmiyya lil-'ādāt wa al-Taqālīd al-Sha'biyya- Al-Juz' al-Thānī min dalīl al-'Amal al-Maydānī li-Jāmi Ī al-Turāth al-Sha'bī,* 73; Finbert, *Le Nil: fleuve du paradis*, passim.

[102] V. Hoffman, *Sufism, Mystics and Saints in Modern Egypt* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1995) 331.

[103] J. Vandier, *Le Papyrus Jumilhac* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1961) 130.

[104] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 199. An interesting parallel exists in modern-day Cameroon, where politicians use witchcraft to gain and maintain power, while simultaneously denouncing their constituents for using the same witchcraft to undermine them; see P. Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa = Sorcellerie et politique en Afrique*, translated by P. Geschiere and J. Roitman (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1997).

[105] Morgan, *Sefer Ha-Razim. The Book of Mysteries*, 9.

[106] Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 298.

prudence, and practitioners of the act are considered apostate, and should be put to death according to Maliki and Shafa´i law, while according to Hanafi law, death is possible but subject to certain conditions.[107] However, according to all schools of Islamic law except Hanafi, Christian and Jewish magicians are not to be put to death, for because they are not Muslim, they are not guilty of apostasy, and are only subject to reprimand for their acts.[108] These laws are alluded to in text 1, which threatens judgement for the act in the hereafter if the figurine is left longer than seven days in the fire, killing the victim. Magicians seem to have feared this, as Blackman said that it would be very difficult to find a magician willing to burn wax figurines or put clay ones in water, both of which would result in death of the victim, no matter how much money they were offered.[109] The practice of magic has also been the subject of Biblical and repeated ecclesiastical injunctions up until today.[110] Magicians were reported to have been thrown in jail or even beheaded in Egypt during the 19th century for their nefarious activities,[111] and cases of magicians in trouble with the law are commonly reported today in Egyptian newspapers (although today they are usually charged with charlatanry).[112]

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[107] The Hanafi school law prevailed in Egypt in the early days of Islam in Egypt. Today, Shafa´i law predominates in Lower Egypt, while Maliki is followed in Upper Egypt. I wish to thank Muhammad Eissa for discussing with me the various schools of law.

[108] G. Bousquet, "Fiqh et sorcellerie," *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales de l'Université d'Alger* 8 (1949-50) 230-34, esp. 231-34; Yusuf Al-Qaradāwī, *Al-Ḥallālu wa al-Ḥarāmu fi al-Islām* [= *The Licit and the Illicit in Islam*] (Cairo: Dār al-Iʿtiṣām Publishers, 1974) 252-53. It is probably for this reason that Blackman said that it would be very difficult to find a magician willing to burn wax figurines or put clay figurines in water, both of which would result in the death of the victim, even if offered a large sum of money (Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt: Their Religious, Social and Industrial Life*, 197). The prophet Muhammad is said to have been made ill by a Jewish woman who pierced a wax figurine of him with a needle, and blew upon knots in a thread made from the hair of an irascible woman (H. E. E. Hayes, "Islam and Magic in Egypt," *The Moslem World* 4 (1914) 396-406, esp. 404-05). This story is apparently the subject of a number of Quranic commentaries and ahadith (Doutté, *Magie & religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*, 298 n 1). For references to discussions of the reputations of Jewish magicians, see William M. Brashear, "The Greek Magical Papyri: An Introduction and Survey; Annotated Bibliography (1928-1994)," *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.18.5 (1995): 3380-3684, esp. 3426 n 222.

[109] Blackman, *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt: Their Religious, Social and Industrial Life*, 197.

[110] Viaud, *Magie et coutumes populaires chez les coptes d'Égypte*, 37-38.

[111] Lane, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, 288-89; L. Laborde, *Recherches de ce qu'il s'est conservé dans l'Égypte moderne de la science des anciens magiciens* (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1941) 15.

[112] A recent case is reported by Khalid Idris, "Dajjālun yaʿtadīʿalā al-Sayyidāt fi Jalasāti al Siḥr wa al-sha'awada" (= "A Charlatan Attacks Women during Sessions of Magic") *Al-Wafd* 4 (1998) 4.

In spite of religious prohibitions, the perceived effectiveness of the execration ritual has not been diminished by the changes in religion in Egypt, although the morality and orthodoxy of those who do engage in it is seen as suspect. Although the passages from the Bible and Quran are used by magicians in carrying out execration magic, from a strictly religious perspective it would be inappropriate to call it "Coptic magic" or "Islamic magic."[113] Perhaps is best simply called "Egyptian magic", for these are practices that have their origins thousands of years ago in Egypt's prehistory and have continued along the banks of the Nile until today.

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[113] El-Sayed H. el-Aswad, "Patterns of Thought: An Anthropological Study of Rural Egyptian World Views" (Ph.D. dissertation; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1988) 265-68; H. Hinge, "Islamic Magic in Contemporary Egypt" *Temenos* 31 (1995) 93-112, esp. 10.

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